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AN INTERNATIONAL PALESTINIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

THE RETURN

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by John Roberts

Palestinians and the Media

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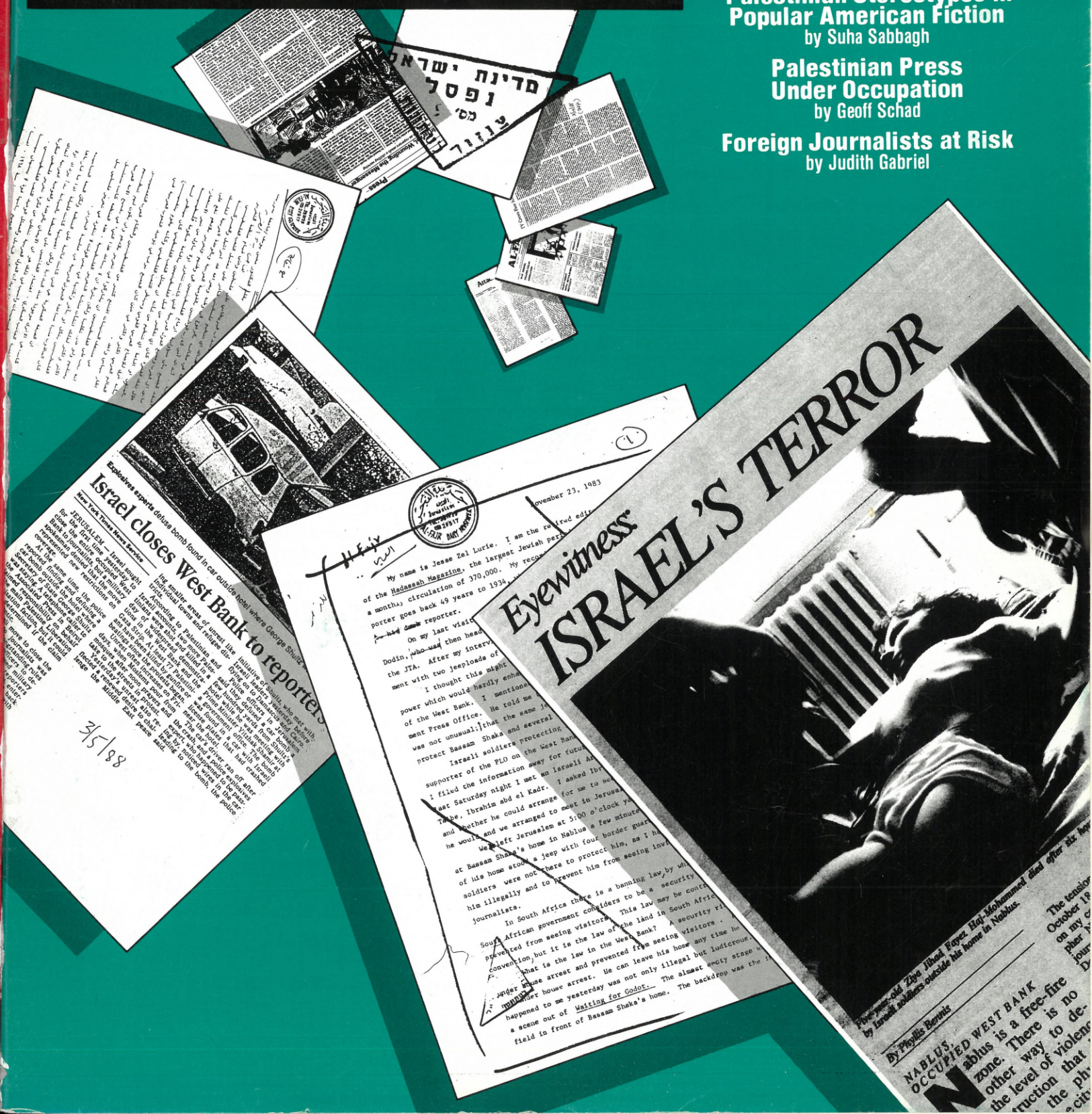

There must be an end to this humiliation.

THE RETURN

AN INTERNATIONAL PALESTINIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Publisher & Founder
Raymonda H. Tawil

Editor-in-Chief
Bishara A. Bahbah, Ph.D.

Editorial Board

John D. Law
Writer
International Consultant

The Honorable Talcott Seelye
Former U.S. Foreign Service Officer

Mohamed Hakki
Journalist

Samer Burgan
Attorney

Mailing Address:
Jerusalem Press Service
865 National Press Building · Washington, D.C. 20045
Telephone: (202) 783-2511 Fax: (202) 783-2514

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GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's statements renouncing and condemning terrorism, accepting U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and recognizing Israel and its right to live in peace and security, have provided the first real breakthrough in the thorny path to Middle East peace.

The United States, not without considerable prodding and worldwide pressure, responded positively to the PLO's message of peace. The U.S. government authorized its ambassador to Tunisia to enter into a "substantive dialogue" with PLO representatives.

Israel's reaction was predictable: "No" to dialogue with the PLO; "No" to withdrawal from Palestinian territories occupied since 1967; and "No" to an independent Palestinian state.

What next?

Leaving it all up to the Israelis would kill the prospects for peace. The Israelis, although unhappy and uncomfortable with the status quo, find it more manageable than an unpredictable future. Pinning one's hopes on Israeli benevolence and willingness to make peace would be self-defeating.

To expect too much from the new Palestinian relationship with the United States would be equally self-defeating. The United States proclaims its objective is a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. However, history has demonstrated that when faced with a choice between advancing the prospects of peace or supporting Israel's positions, the United States generally backs Israel.

One may wish to be optimistic with a new U.S. administration about to take charge. However, Arabs have always hoped that each

new U.S. administration would be a bit more even-handed, only to be disappointed.

Thus, the burden of pursuing peace lies on Palestinian shoulders. After all, it was the *Intifadah* coupled with the wise and pragmatic leadership of the PLO that made the political gains of the past 13 months possible. Unless a new offensive is undertaken by the Palestinians both inside and outside occupied Palestine, then the prospects for peace in the Middle East will dwindle with time.

The *Intifadah* cannot stop or slow down. The *Intifadah* needs to grow in vigor and strength. This is the only way the Israelis will realize that the occupation is a burden rather than a gain.

The PLO should continue to press its political peace initiative without feeling discouraged. Skeptics, including Israelis and Americans, might eventually come to realize that the PLO is serious about its peace efforts.

Militarily, the PLO should strengthen itself—not to act as an aggressor, but to act as a protector of Palestinians everywhere. If Israel attacks Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and is made to pay a heavy price for such an incursion, the next time Israel might think twice about its policy of aggression.

In short, no one is going to deliver Palestine from Israel's clutches to the Palestinians on a silver platter. The Palestinians will have to do most of the work.

At the same time, Israel, not just for the sake of Palestinians, but for its own sake and that of its children, should give peace a chance. The United States can help by telling the Israelis that there is a limit to U.S. willingness to bail them out and that, eventually, the Israelis will have to be accountable for their own actions.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

As the minister of a Christian Church, I want you to know that not all churches in America are backing Israel. Having made two trips to Palestine-Israel, I have seen and heard how Palestinians have been treated.

I suggest that somehow you get enough clergy from America to talk to a representative group of Palestinians by touring that land. The only way truth can get through is from the lips of Americans who have been there.

Please be assured that you are not alone in your struggle for equality in that area. You remain in our prayers.

J. Edward Cherryholmes
Minister
First United
Methodist Church
Sanger, Texas

The U.S. And The PLO: What Next?

John Roberts

"We oppose the creation of an independent Palestinian state; its establishment is inimical to the security interests of Israel, Jordan and the U.S. We will not support the creation of any Palestinian entity that could place Israel's security in jeopardy."

This was the Republican party declaration on Palestine during last year's triumphant presidential campaign by Vice-President George Bush. And yet, on December 14, 1988, the outgoing Reagan administration, with Bush's full and enthusiastic support, announced that it was opening a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The administration claims that its primary reason for this change of attitude was simply because the PLO finally agreed to meet its conditions for a dialogue. However, from the PLO perspective, Arafat's declarations in Geneva—which bolstered the PLO's credibility in the United States and Western Europe—were balanced by the PLO's declarations in Algiers—which maintained its credibility with the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. Whether by design or accident, Arafat is now in possession of a two-part strategy appealing to the West at both a popular level and at a governmental level. Western opinion polls show rising support for a Palestinian homeland, and with Arafat's renunciation of terrorism and acknowledgment of Israel's right to exist, the PLO has now gained even more international respect.

Arafat's Geneva statements should not be underestimated. They have a great impact on U.S. policymakers' attitudes toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. One Washington political source commented, "It's one less problem for Bush to deal with." He was acknowledging the prevailing view that the Bush team has gained significantly from the outgoing Reagan administration's undertaking to open the dialogue with the PLO. Thus, the Bush administration will be freed of much of the stigma which might otherwise have accompanied the decision.

Yet, Bush is already known to want to make progress on the Palestine issue. When Secretary of State George Shultz denied Arafat a visa to attend the U.N. General Assembly in New York, a Washington press report quoted the president-elect as telling one of his aides that the visa rejection was "a damn fool mistake." And when Arafat spoke in Geneva, sources on the Bush transition team said the United States would be devaluing its word if it failed to open talks in the wake of his renunciation of terrorism, recongnition of Israel, and acceptance of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for peace in the Middle East.

In addition, Shultz's announcement that the PLO had met U.S. conditions for a dialogue placed the issue of Palestinian self-determination firmly on the U.S. politicial agenda—even if Washington does not believe that an independent Palestinian state would be the best outcome. "The Palestinians," declared State Department Spokesman Charles Redman, possess a "right to pursue their desire for an independent state" through direct negotiations with Israel.

John Roberts is the U.S. correspondent for Al-Hayat, *a London-based, Arabic-language news magazine.*

Peace, Come What May

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat at press conference in Geneva on December 13, 1988.

[Following is the full text of the statement PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat read in English to a news conference in Geneva on December 14, 1988. Hours later, the United States decided to enter into a dialogue with the PLO.]

Let me highlight my views before you. Our desire for peace is a strategy and not an interim tactic. We are bent on peace come what may, come what may.

Our statehood provides salvation to the Palestinians and peace to both Palestinians and Israelis.

Self-determination means survival for the Palestinians, and our survival does not destroy the survival of the Israelis as their rulers claim. Yesterday in my speech I made reference to United Nations Resolution 181 as the basis for Palestinian independence. I also made reference to our acceptance of Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for negotiations with Israel within the framework of the international conference. These three resolutions were endorsed by our Palestine National Council session in Algiers.

In my speech also yesterday, it was clear that we mean our people's right to freedom and national independence, according to Resolution 181, and the right of all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict to exist in peace and security, and, as I have mentioned, including the state of Palestine, Israel and other neighbors, according to the Resolutions 242 and 338.

As for terrorism, I renounced it yesterday in no uncertain terms, and yet I repeat for the record that we totally and absolutely renounce all forms of terrorism, including individual, group and state terrorism.

Between Geneva and Algiers, we have made our position crystal clear. Any more talk such as "the Palestinians should give more"—you remember this slogan?—or "it is not enough" or "the Palestinians are engaging in propaganda games and public relations exercises" will be damaging and counterproductive.

Enough is enough. Enough is enough. Enough is enough. All remaining matters should be discussed around the table and within the international conference.

Let it be absolutely clear that neither Arafat, nor any for that matter, can stop the *Intifada*, the uprising. The *Intifada* will come to an end only when practical and tangible steps have been taken towards the achievement of our national aims and establishment of our independent Palestinian state.

In this context I expect the EEC [European Economic Community] to play a more effective role in promoting peace in our region. They have a political responsibility, they have a moral responsibility, and they can deal with it.

Finally, I declare before you and I ask you to kindly quote me on that: We want peace. We want peace. We are committed to peace. We are committed to peace. We want to live in our Palestinian state, and let live. Thank you. ■

Still, it is by no means certain that the outcome of any peace negotiations would be a fully independent Palestinian state. Washington's principled objections to such a development, epitomized in last summer's Republican party platform plank on the issue, remain extremely strong. In late December, Bush himself said that he believes the best solution might be some form of confederation with Jordan. Such a statement harks back to both the Reagan initiative of September 1, 1982, and Arafat's address to the U.N. General Assembly in Geneva, in which he again proposed a confederal solution.

The parallels between the Bush and Arafat approaches have not yet been considered by U.S. analysts, in large part because neither Bush nor his Secretary of State-designate James Baker has elaborated on Bush's comments. But Bush did speak of a confederation. He used a term which the United States has scrupulously avoided in the past. Six years ago, Reagan only had spoken of the U.S. belief that "self-government by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offers the best chance for a durable, just and lasting peace."

Curiously enough, the United States has not followed up on this idea since U.S. Ambassador to Tunisia Robert Pelletreau opened talks with the PLO in mid-December. It seems that substantive dialogue on medium and long-term

issues will have to wait for the arrival of President Bush on January 20. Then, the United States is expected to start advocating that elections be held in the West Bank and Gaza. Elections are considered to be vitally important by some analysts since elections covering all of the territories currently occupied by Israel would serve the immediate and practical purpose of defining the boundaries of any prospective Palestinian state. Such elections would also serve the longer-term and more theoretical purpose of safeguarding the territories' constitutional position in international law as lands occupied by Israel and which cannot therefore generally be considered available for annexation.

Hassan Abdel Rahman, the director of the Palestine Affairs Center in Washington, D.C., has acknowledged that there is still some distance between the positions of the United States and the PLO, but he appears confident that the Bush administration will eventually accept the reality of Palestinian aspirations: "The purpose of the dialogue is to bridge the gap, and we hope the U.S. will be true to its principles, namely the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people. We are sure that in the end, the U.S. will come around to the right of the Palestinians to their own independent state." ■

Reagan Authorizes Dialogue With The PLO

[Following is the text of a statement issued on December 14, 1988, by U.S. President Ronald Reagan authorizing U.S.-PLO dialogue.]

The Palestine Liberation Organization today issued a statement in which it accepted United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognized Israel's right to exist, and renounced terrorism. These have long been our conditions for a substantive dialogue. They have been met. Therefore, I have authorized the State Department to enter into a substantive dialogue with P.L.O. representatives. The Palestine Liberation Organization must live up to its statements. In particular, it must demonstrate that its renunciation of terrorism is pervasive and permanent.

The initiation of a dialogue between the United States and P.L.O. representatives is an important step in the peace process, the more so because it represents the serious evolution of Palestinian thinking toward realistic and pragmatic positions on the key issues. But the objective of the United States remains, as always, a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. In that light, we view this development as one more step toward the beginning of direct negotiations between the parties, which alone can lead to such a peace.

The United States' special commitment to Israel's security and well-being remains unshakable. Indeed, a major reason for our entry into this dialogue is to help Israel achieve the recognition and security it deserves. ■

Shultz: The U.S. Is Ready To Talk To The PLO

[Following is the text of the statement, issued on December 14, 1988, by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, announcing that the United States is ready for a substantive dialogue with the PLO.]

The Palestine Liberation Organization today issued a statement in which it accepted U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognized Israel's right to exist in peace and security and renounced terrorism. As a result, the United States is prepared for a substantive dialogue with P.L.O. representatives.

I am designating our Ambassador to Tunisia as the only authorized channel for that dialogue. The objective of the United States remains as always, a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. In that light, I view this development as one more step toward the beginning of direct negotiations between the parties which alone can lead to such a peace.

Nothing here may be taken to imply an acceptance or recognition by the United States of an independent Palestinian state. The position of the U.S. is that the status of the West Bank and Gaza cannot be determined by unilateral acts of either side, but only through a process of negotiations. The United States does not recognize the declaration of an independent Palestinian state.

It is also important to emphasize that the United States' commitment to the security of Israel remains unflinching. ■

The Palestinian Press

Two Studies of News Gathering Under Occupation

Geoffrey D. Schad

Committee to Protect Journalists and Article 19. *Journalism under Occupation: Israel's Regulation of the Palestinian Press.* New York: Committee to Protect Journalists, 1988.

Shinar, Dov and Danny Rubenstein. *Palestinian Press in the West Bank: The Political Dimension.* Jerusalem and Boulder, Colorado: West Bank Database Project and Westview Press, 1987.

The Palestinian press has existed since Ottoman times, and played a major role in the Palestinian national movement in both the British Mandatory period and the two decades of Jordanian rule in the West bank. Today it consists of the daily newspapers and magazines published in East Jerusalem which have evolved under Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza since 1967. Since then, the Palestinian press has had to deal with the realities of the occupation and with the peculiar legal regime imposed upon it because of its location in Jerusalem. Two major issues must be considered in any serious discussion of the Palestinian news media. The first is the media's role in shaping the Palestinian political debate. The second issue, which has a considerable effect on the first, is how the Israeli authorities attempt to control the Palestinian media. Both books under consideration treat these two issues, albeit from different points of view and with differing emphases.

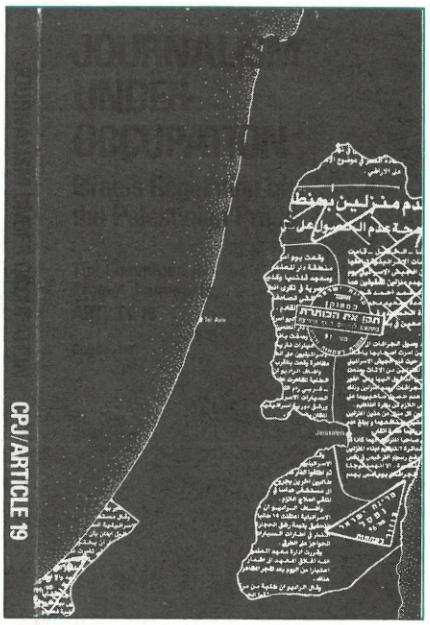
Shinar and Rubenstein's *Palestinian Press in the West Bank* is fundamentally a social-science monograph that attempts to develop a model for the study of the Palestinian press by using content analysis, whereas CPJ/Article 19's *Journalism under Occupation* is a detailed expose of the measures taken by the Israeli government to restrict freedom of the press. While both works are of value, if you must choose between the two, read *Journalism under Occupation.* Not only does it examine in more detail the political and legal realities of the situation, but it covers events through the Uprising. *Palestinian Press in the West Bank* discusses Palestinian media treatment of specific events between February, 1985 and December, 1986.

In its introduction, *Palestinian Press in the West Bank* acknowledges a very important feature of the Palestinian press: in the absence of other public political activity by Palestinians under occupation, it is the only permitted forum for the discussion of national issues. The Palestinian press is viewed by the authors as a "mobilization press," the primary task of which is the promotion of nation-building and liberation.

After an overview of the history and structure of the Palestinian news media and the constraints imposed upon it, including an interesting discussion of the problem of professional standards, Shinar and Rubenstein move on to the meat of their analysis. They give a precis of the political dimension of the Palestinian press, examining how Palestinian newspapers report and comment on internal Palestinian matters, Israeli and international affairs, as well as the language

Geoffrey D. Schad holds an M.A. in Middle Eastern studies from Harvard University and is the editor of the Arab Press Bulletin.

Journalism under Occupation is clearly "must reading" for anyone who seeks an understanding of the dynamics of the Palestinian press.



employed by the papers. It is in this section that one of the most regrettable lapses of the book occurs. In attempting to explain the militancy of language often adopted by the Palestinian press, the authors resort to a neo-Orientalist analysis of the Arabic language itself:

> This militancy of style has been enhanced by some intrinsic qualities of the Arabic language—such as a rich grammar, a repetitive style, and a quality of vagueness whereby the responsibility of understanding is left to the listener or reader—as well as by the deep respect maintained by Arabs to the written and spoken word. Thus, experts have stated that the Arabic language shapes contents in a way that words take precedence over ideas and ideas take precedence over facts.

While no one would dispute that Arabic rhetorical style differs from the style of written English or Hebrew, the sources of the militant style of discourse employed in the Palestinian media are to be found in the realities of life under occupation—not in some mysterious psychology of language.

The bulk of Shinar and Rubenstein's analysis is devoted to a study of *Al-Fajr*, *Al-Quds* and *Al-Sha'ab*'s treatment of three categories of events from February 1985 to December 1986. These categories include—Palestinian internal-external events, as exemplified by the Hussein-Arafat Amman Accord; West Bank internal events, the example used being the appointment and assassination of the late Zafer Al-Masri, mayor of Nablus; and Palestinian-Israeli events, using the murder of a yeshiva student in Jerusalem in November 1986 and subsequent events at Bir Zeit University.

Using a detailed and complex methodology, the authors describe how favorably or unfavorably the three papers treated various actors in the events concerned, as well as the amount of coverage given to the event, and how the stories were placed in the papers. While doubtless of interest to those well versed in the type of statistical analysis used by social scientists, this section makes rough going for the general reader.

Furthermore, after a year of the Uprising, these events seem to be ancient history in the context of Palestinian-Israeli relations, although of course, this is no fault of the authors. Another omission that is not the authors' fault is the lack of any consideration of the pro-Jordanian daily *Al-Nahar*, launched as part of King Hussein's West Bank development scheme in 1987.

The authors' conclusions, as far as they concern the political role of the Palestinian press, are hardly surprising. They find what they set out to prove: that the Palestinian news media are an integral part of the overall Palestinian national movement. The study is a carefully researched exercise in social science, and is a contribution to the study of the role of the media in developing countries. It makes interesting observations on the subtle distinctions among the leading Palestinian dailies, but its purview is too restricted to serve as an introduction to the Palestinian media for the general reader.

CPJ/Article 19's *Journalism under Occupation* is much better suited to that role. It is the joint production of two organizations devoted to protecting freedom of the press and expression worldwide (the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, founded in 1981, seeks to protect journalists' professional and human rights,

while Article 19, the London-based international center on censorship founded in 1986, takes its name from the relevant section of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). *Journalism under Occupation* is an eye-opening description of the labyrinth of laws, regulations and policies used by the Israeli occupation authorities to contain and repress Palestinian freedom of expression.

In their defense of Palestinian rights to freedom of expression, CPJ and Article 19 are quick to dispose of an argument frequently employed by apologists for Israel's occupation—the idea that criticism of Israel's treatment of the Palestinian media is irrelevant and unfair given the absence of freedom of the press in the Arab World. In the introduction, the authors state,

> It is the policy of CPJ and Article 19 to examine freedoms in a country in terms of international standards, rather than in comparison with other countries. This report does not compare press freedoms in the [O]ccupied [T]erritories to freedoms elsewhere in the Middle East, or to other situations of military occupation, or to what the press might be like in an independent Palestinian state. Press conditions in various countries of the Middle East *have* (reviewers' emphasis) been the subject of numerous studies by CPJ and Article 19.

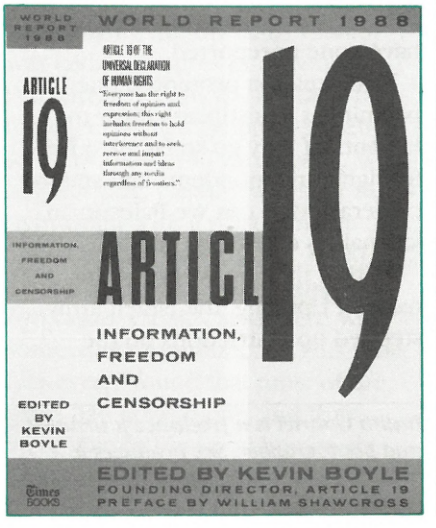
Elsewhere it is pointed out that if a comparison must be made, it is to the press conditions prevailing in Israel proper, as the press there operates under the same legal system as the Palestinian press. Indeed, the authors point out that the repression under which the Palestinian press must operate should be of concern to Israeli journalists. Some of the same measures used against the Palestinian press have already been used against Israeli publications. For example, the Alternative Information Center and *Derech Hanitzotz/Tariq Al-Sharara* were both closed.

While not a legal tome, *Journalism under Occupation* discusses the laws used to regulate the press. Both the Israeli and Palestinian media are subject to laws first established by the British Mandate: the Press Ordinance of 1933 and the Defence (Emergency) Regulations of 1945. These laws impose two prior constraints upon journalists: licensing and censorship.

All publications require a license from the minister of Interior before they can commence publishing. The minister may deny, suspend, or revoke such license at any time without any explanation. Having first obtained a license, newspapers must submit all copy to the military censor for approval before publication. Although ostensibly a means to prevent the publication of material damaging to Israeli security, with respect to Palestinian papers, the censorship is transparently political. Publication of material rejected by, or not submitted to the censor, results in stiff penalties, including suspension or revocation of publishing licenses and permits to distribute.

The problem for Palestinian editors is that they never know what will be permitted or forbidden. One method used to guarantee permission, the translation and reprinting of material that has already appeared in the Israeli press, is not foolproof. What is permitted in Hebrew may be forbidden in Arabic. In addition, papers are not permitted to leave white spaces where material has been prohibited or partially

The problem for Palestinian editors is that they never know what will be permitted or forbidden. One method used to guarantee permission, the translation and reprinting of material that has already appeared in the Israeli press, is not foolproof.



Foreign Journalists At Risk

The Danger Mounts for those Covering the *Intifadah*

Judith Gabriel

Dangers are mounting for journalists and photographers covering the Palestinian *Intifadah*. Media personnel increasingly find themselves threatened by the Israeli government, police, border police, and army troops.

Reporters and camera crews have been assaulted, shoved and beaten, their cameras and equipment hurled to the ground, their film confiscated and misused. They have been threatened at gunpoint, taunted by Israeli civilians, and fired at by soldiers. More than 150 such incidents have been reported to the Israeli Foreign Press Association, and dozens more have gone unreported.

The situation prompted one prominent Palestinian editor to lament: "If they go so far as to hit foreign correspondents and smash cameras, what can we Palestinian journalists do except cry?"

Within the first weeks of the nascent Uprising, the Israeli army stepped up restrictions on the international press, regularly barring media from centers of population. But more alarming to media watchdogs was the unprecedented practice of physical assaults against journalists by members of the Israeli army and police.

Even more disturbing is the steady emergence of menacing hostility toward the press from the Israeli civilian population, particularly among extremists and settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. An Israeli journalist, Joel Greenberg, portrayed the predicament of the foreign correspondents this way:

> First, access to areas of tension is barred, then sources of second-hand information are silenced, and finally, the finished news reports are subject to tightened censorship. Surrounding this system of restrictions like an outer ring is a public atmosphere of hostility to the press.

Vigilante Attacks

In early March, Israeli settlers in Hebron attacked a husband-and-wife team of photographers working for Reuters News Agency and *Time* magazine, striking the American man in the mouth, and knocking his wife unconscious.

In June, bumper stickers were distributed by a group of West Bank settlers and began appearing in Jerusalem. The sticker, adorned with a snake poised to strike, read: "The People Against Hostile Media."

Eventually, such slogans gave way to vigilante attacks. In late November, a Reuters news correspondent, Steve Weizman, was assaulted outside his Jerusalem home. Weizman's press credentials had been revoked temporarily because of an article he wrote about undercover army death-squads operating in the West Bank. Weizman reported that at least two unidentified men attacked him as he parked his car outside his house. One assailant smashed his face into the car roof and held his head down, while another hit him in the kidneys.

Just two weeks earlier, a car belonging to the Reuters chief correspondent in Jerusalem, Paul Taylor, was damaged when the car

Judith Gabriel is a freelance journalist and photographer. She produces a biweekly radio program in Los Angeles called Middle East in Focus.

battery exploded as the car was started. A wire found underneath the engine suggested it had been intentionally short-circuited.

Using a telephoto lens, a CBS cameraman caught four Israeli soldiers using rocks to beat two Palestinian youths. After CBS broadcast the footage, their offices in Israel received threatening phone calls. Finally, CBS resorted to hiring security protection for one of its Israeli cameramen and its Tel Aviv bureau.

"There is a climate of hostility among Israeli Jews toward the foreign press, and this hostility has intensified during the *Intifadah*," notes Eric Goldstein of the Committee to Protect Journalists in New York. "Politicians and government officials have fanned the flames of this hostility, blaming the media for the pictures which emerged from Israeli actions."

What can journalists do to protect themselves from attacks by military or civilian vigilantes?

The scenario could escalate into a "Central America-type situation where paramilitary groups or even death squads might operate and no one would be prosecuted," predicated a spokesman for the Committee to Protect Journalists. The first line of defense would be for the government to investigate any such assault, and to "prosecute vigorously. Otherwise, the lack of prosecution would encourage extremists who have intense hostility toward the press."

The first military trial involving an attack on journalists concluded November 22, when an Israeli military court fined a reservist for threatening American photographer Jim Hollander and smashing his camera. The Israeli was ordered to pay damages of $780 to Hollander, and received only a four-month suspended sentence.

"There's an atmosphere that's

Neal Cassidy

***Frontline* Photojournalist Neal Cassidy snapped this picture as Israeli soldiers at left took aim.**

been created by Israeli leaders. And the more that they promote this atmosphere of hostility towards the press, [the more people out there will] interpret that as a green light to attack us," said one foreign correspondent.

Army Assaults

The same green light began flashing months ago, however, among the ranks of the Israeli army. The soldiers seemed determined to believe that if the media wasn't there to see what they were doing, the rest of the world wouldn't know. Then, perhaps, with the army as the only witness they could deny—or justify their actions—at least to themselves.

At first, there were press restrictions in the form of roadblocks and the extemporaneous declaration of closed military zones whenever members of the media showed up. And if they showed up in the "wrong places"—where something was happening that Israel did not want the rest of the world to see—there were harassment and threats, even arrest. In some cases, journalists even have been forced to sign statements printed in Hebrew, which they could not read.

Then the restrictions progressed to physical attacks: beatings, yanked footage, and smashed lenses.

On October 18, 1988, a foreign journalist was shot. Neal Cassidy, a photographer for *Frontline*, a biweekly publication based in California, became the first foreign journalist to be shot by the Israeli army during the Uprising. Cassidy was taking pictures of a group of Palestinian youths in Nablus, who were jeering at a group of Israeli soldiers about 150 yards away. Without warning, Cassidy was shot in his right thigh with a plastic bullet.

Last spring, when up to 1,200 journalists were covering the *Intifadah*, Cassidy said there was some safety in numbers. "This time, however, I found that most of the press had gone home, and they were vulnerable to ad hoc on-the-spot censorship or repression that the Israeli army seems determined

to inflict on the press."

In early March, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, privately urged Israel to expel the media from the Occupied Territories. Kissinger's advice was contained in a confidential memo obtained by *The New York Times*, which paraphrased Kissinger's remarks: "The insurrection must be quelled immediately, and the first step should be to throw out television, *à la* South Africa. To be sure, there will be international criticism of the step, but it will dissipate in short order."

On March 4, for the first time, the Israeli army enforced a blanket ban on news coverage throughout most of the West Bank, with checkpoints outside Jerusalem set up to turn away all news gatherers. The Israelis imposed such bans citing rules which allow army personnel to declare any area a closed military zone. On March 28, the army announced that the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip would be sealed off for three days. It was the first total closure since 1967.

Israel tried to charge that demonstrators were being unduly motivated by the presence of cameras. But the demonstrations went on—with or without reporters. In fact, many reporters and photographers, in search of "rock and roll" photos of stone-throwing demonstrators for their publications, reported not being able to find one.

"If anything has hurt Israel in American eyes in these last months, it was not the reporting but the facts—the unchallenged facts," wrote Anthony Lewis in his column in *The New York Times*. When Israeli soldiers used a bulldozer to try to bury Palestinians alive, there was no way to make that fact look neutral. Reality was not neutral."

Israel, nonetheless, found a way to use the media. Even more heinously, it used the media to glean information for the military authorities. One controversial incident occurred when Israelis confiscated tape from a film crew at a roadblock. The tape showed residents lynching a collaborator. After scanning the confiscated footage, the Israeli army returned to the village the next day and arrested 200 residents.

Using a telephoto lens, a CBS cameraman caught four Israeli soldiers using rocks to beat two Palestinian youths. After CBS broadcast the footage, their offices in Israel received threatening phone calls. Finally, CBS resorted to hiring security protection for one of its Israeli cameramen and its Tel Aviv bureau.

Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin turned a deaf ear to appeals by Foreign Press Association members to bar the army from using their films to identify demonstrators. Such misuse of their footage, journalists feared, would lead Palestinians to see them as being in league with the Israelis.

"We are not in cahoots (with the military) and we don't want to leave the slightest doubt in anyone's mind," said Robert Slater, of the Foreign Press Association. "That's just the worst thing that could happen to us."

In June, in a village in the West Bank, 20 miles north of Jerusalem, Israeli security forces posed as an ABC news crew to lure a Palestinian to their car on the pretext of seeking an interview. Then they arrested him for allegedly tossing firebombs. Protesting the incident, ABC News President Roone Arledge sent a cable to Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, saying that "Such activity presents grave perils to the safety of legitimate journalists."

Still many journalists have been able to slip past the numerous roadblocks erected throughout the Occupied Territories. Often they enter closed areas through a network of back roadways, although they would face the loss of their Israeli press cards if they should be caught. Of course, any Palestinians who helped them, or spoke with the press also faced severe repercussions.

Indeed, the Palestinians' burning drive to tell the world what was going on was stronger than the additional risks they took in contact with journalists. Journalists who visit the villages and camps are eagerly ushered into courtyards and kitchens to see signs of the rampant destruction of the last midnight raid. Old men just out of prison complain that they were dragged away and tortured for no reason of which they are aware. Children show journalists spent tear-gas canisters and describe how they were fired into crowded rooms, or, in one case, how an Israeli soldier placed a tear-gas canister in the mouth of a child. "Go tell the world," the boy's father says. "Go tell them what is happening here." ■

Palestinian Stereotypes In Popular American Fiction

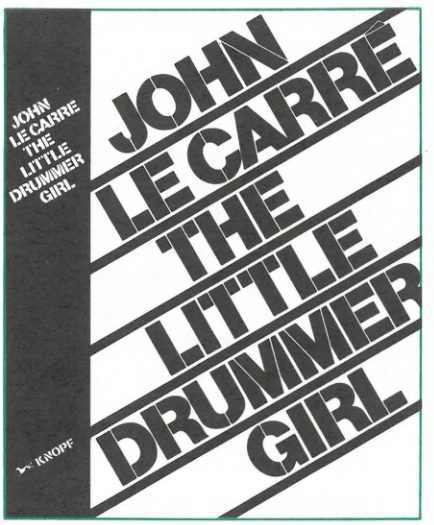
Suha Sabbagh

Next to television and films, popular fiction is very important in defining American views on the Middle East. Popular novels are sold everywhere, in book stands, at airport terminals, bus and train stations, and a substantial amount of money is invested in marketing these novels. The views that these novels reflect help to form American attitudes toward the Palestine problem.

In part, the terrorist image of the Palestinian is kept alive in popular fiction. The Arab-Israeli conflict has produced a number of novels, spy stories, and "thrillers" where Palestinian characters are portrayed as either terrorists or culturally backward and tribal. The negative stereotype of the Palestinian has even preempted the negative stereotype of the Arab that preceded it. Thanks to Orientalism, the Arab World has often been conceived of as a place where lascivious men languish in harems, and pass their time with aberrant behavior and violence. Now it is the Palestinian terrorists who are described as violent, revelling in sexual excesses, and living high on the hog.

The civil rights movement sensitized American television viewers to negative ethnic stereotyping and Arab Americans did benefit to a limited degree. But, the sensitization process that began in the 1960s has had less impact on writing. In novels, the author is restrained only by the reader's willingness to accept what is said. Since there are no alternative images that dispute, contradict, or challenge the notions put forth about Palestinians, the innocent reader can offer very little resistance. The terrorist stereotype of the Palestinian sinks into the national subconscious unchallenged.

In the intimate world between reader and writer, racist notions seem to be more easily tolerated than on television. And in popular fiction, the racial slurs directed at Arabs seem limitless. *The Haj*, published in 1984 by Leon Uris, author of *Exodus*, describes Palestinians as a backward and



Suha Sabbagh holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Currently she is researching and writing about the role of women in Palestinian literature.

incestuous people whose lives are governed by a sense of vendetta against Israel. The degree of anti-Arabism expressed in the *The Haj* probably would not be accepted on television.

The prototype for most historical novels is *Exodus*. The image of Israel as a beleaguered nation struggling for survival, propagated in this novel has had a significant impact on other novels: James Michener's *The Source*, 1978, and a number of less read novels such as Gloria Goldreich's *This Burning Harvest*, and Clive Irving's *Promise The Earth*, 1983. It is astonishing to find that the very objective of these so-called "historical" novels is to remove the Palestinian people from the historical process. Palestinian behavior is always depicted as motivated by tribalism; a sinister view of Islam further distorts the reality. Palestinians are seen as a people not even capable of locating their existence and their actions in modern history. The Arab-Israeli conflict is thus turned into a contest between an advanced Israeli culture and a backward, tribal Arab World. Consequently, the source of the Middle East problem is defined as Arab backwardness, not in terms of the historical events that led to the Palestine problem.

Thrillers and spy stories are far more abundant than historical novels. Many plots are based on a Palestinian "terrorist" with an excessive sexual appetite (mostly for blondes) and an extravagant lifestyle. The British writer, John Le Carré's *Little Drummer Girl*, 1983, and David Ignatius' *Agents of Innocence*, 1987, belong to a different category of spy stories, one in which the Palestinian is portrayed in relatively favorable terms. Although neither author claims to have written a historical novel, their stereotype of the Palestinian is based on the historical

Since there are no alternative images that dispute, contradict, or challenge the notions put forth about Palestinians, the innocent reader can offer very little resistance.

developments that led to their dispersal. The Palestinian is still portrayed as a terrorist, but his actions are understood as the result of his being dispossessed, not because he is pursuing a tribal vendetta against the whole world. Should a political solution to the conflict be found, the reader is led to conclude that "terrorism" will end. Such plots do not deny the need for a political solution to the Palestine problem and are, therefore, less removed from reality.

With the exception of *Agents of Innocence*, where the protagonist is based on the life of Hassan Salameh, all novels portray the Palestinian less as an individual and more as a flat stereotype. The nature of this stereotype can only be addressed through a closer look at each novel.

THE HAJ

The Haj traces the history of a Palestinian family roughly from the 1936 riots through its dispersal in 1948 when the state of Israel forcibly came into existence. Again, it must be stated that the negative image of the Palestinian family propagated in this novel would not be tolerated were the same reference to be made to any other ethnic group in the United States.

The author alludes to incestuous relations between mothers and sons, between fathers and very young sons, and between women of the same household. The only morés to which the Arab adheres is that of back stabbing, a problem which even afflicts members of the same family. Patriarchs, like Ibrahim, the Haj, are totally selfish creatures who care very little about their wives and actually hate their sons.

Women and children suffer more at the hands of men than they did as a consequence of their dispersal by Israel. As refugees, women and children are forced to live in primitive conditions, but the clear implication is that this comes naturally to a people so primitive. Women suffer a great deal more due to the polygamous nature of Arab society. And children suffer a great deal at the hands of adults. The result is a house, and by extension a society, divided and at war with itself. Certainly, there is room for improving the lot of women and children in Arab society, but *The Haj* presents a very unfair and distorted picture.

In the camps on the West Bank, family ties constitute the only source of strength left to individuals against a harsh political and historical reality. The family is not the down-fall of the Palestinian people, it is the Palestinians' primary source of hope. But by presenting family conflicts as the main problem confronting Palestinians, the novel pushes the historical injustices with which the Palestinians must deal to the back burner.

LITTLE DRUMMER GIRL

After *The Haj*, John Le Carré's novel, *Little Drummer Girl*, sold

more copies than any other novel on the Middle East. First published in England, the novel immediately became a best seller in the United States. Le Carré researched his subject well. He spent time with Palestinians in Beirut where he was introduced to Salah Tamari, a member of the resistance whom he thanks in his introduction.

In relation to other novels, the author succeeds in conveying the accurate historical context of the Palestine problem. The Palestinians are portrayed as victims of a brutal history. But the plot of this spy thriller remains focused on the Mossad agents in their hunt for two Palestinian brothers who master-minded the death of several Jews in Germany. It is the tale of an elaborate and patiently spun web of espionage set up to catch the two Palestinian brothers. But, as is characteristic of other novels, the personalities and perspectives of the two brothers—the Palestinians—remain secondary to the tale.

Also, Palestinians, when presented as terrorists, are less likely to be characters with whom the reader can empathize. Consequently, the reader does not identify with the two Palestinian characters.

In conclusion, the stereotyping of Palestinians is either based on the image of the terrorist, or it is rooted in the tribal nature of Arabs. Novels that attribute the Arab-Israeli conflict to the tribal nature of Arabs perpetrate the worst stereotype of both Palestinians and Arabs as a whole. Although it is a reserved compliment, novels like Le Carré's work are among the best simply because the historical context of the conflict has not been neglected. ■

Certain passages in this article were excerpted from an issue paper written by the same author and entitled *The Image of The Arab in Popular Fiction.*

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Palestinians In American Movies: The 1980s

Jack G. Shaheen

Since the beginning of the *Intifadah*, Israelis have killed more than 300 Palestinians. Almost daily, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are being shot, deported, imprisoned, gassed, and beaten. We have not only read or heard about the events in occupied Palestine but we have also seen them for over a year on television. Considering the far-reaching effects of these events, especially when they are brought into America's living room, why do American filmmakers continue to show the Palestinian as a perpetrator of violence rather than a victim of violence?

Evolving attitudes and concerns about ethnic and racial groups are reflected in motion pictures. This being the case, at the very least, one would expect to start seeing Palestinians depicted as a people common to the human mosaic, not as terrorists. Perhaps the opposite is true because films contain political messages which help influence public opinion, and subsequently, foreign policy decisions.

Motion pictures do more than entertain. "Entertainment plays a leading role in shaping attitudes and ideas, including political ones," notes communications scholar Erik Barnouw. "The cinema does not exist in a sublime state of innocence, untouched by the world," writes Barnouw, "it also has a political content, whether conscious or unconscious, hidden or overt."

Recently, by accepting U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, which recognize Israel, the Palestine National Council took a major step toward achieving peace in the Middle East. However, on the grounds that he is a threat to national security, the United States has refused to allow Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat to address the United Nations in New York.

Political screen scenarios help foster prejudice and act as propaganda. Effective propaganda involves "techniques of influence employed by a government, a party, an administration, a pressure group, with the view of changing (or maintaining) the behavior of the public," writes French intellectual Jacques Ellul. "Propaganda must constantly short-circuit all thoughts and decision," he says. When propagandists continually repeat the same theme, distorted images of the group (in this case, the Palestinians) will reach the public and take hold.

Since 1980, Hollywood's image-makers have demonized and delegitimized Palestinians in 10 major motion pictures. Screenwriters have stigmatized Palestinians as: "scumbag," "son-of-a-bitch," "the Gucci Terrorist," "a fly in a piece of shit," "animals," "gangsters," "bastards," "fuckin' pigs," "desert dwellers," and "stateless savages" who "massacre children" and "slash your throat for 50 bucks, American."

Nine films—*The Ambassador*, *The Little Drummer Girl*, *Half-Moon Street*, *The Delta Force*, *Hostage*, *Deadline*, *Wanted Dead or Alive*, *Children of Rage*, and *Death Before Dishonor*—show Palestinian terror directed against innocents. Their savagery is directed at Americans (seven films), Israelis

Jack G. Shaheen is a professor at the School of Fine Arts and Communications at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Illinois.

(six films), fellow Arabs (six films) and Europeans (one film). The only film not to perpetuate the Palestinian-terrorist myth is Universal's *Hanna K.*

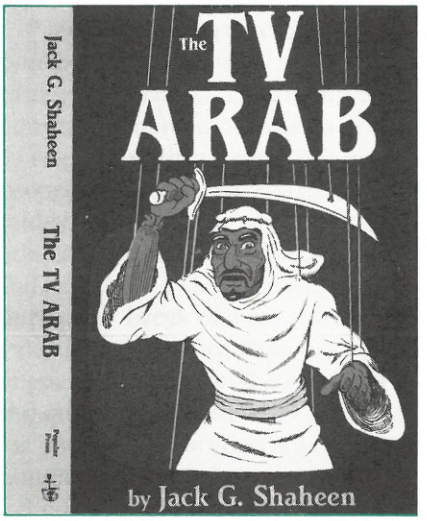
To ascertain the pervasiveness of Hollywood's terrorist stereotype, it is necessary to examine the films. The comments on Palestinian characters and themes given here are only a modest sample of the images that fill silver screens. Four features—*Death Before Dishonor*, *Wanted Dead or Alive*, *The Delta Force* and *Hostage*—show Palestinian terrorists as heartless beings who murder American servicemen and civilians.

In *Death Before Dishonor* (1987), Palestinians blow up the American embassy. The U.S. ambassador, on viewing the carnage, clasps a burnt doll from the rubble, saying: "What kind of savages would do this? So much blood everywhere." Throughout the film, viewers see Palestinians shoot and torture marines and murder fellow Arabs. The terror ceases only when the marines team up with Israelis. There are "only eight of us," says a Mossad agent; the odds are "twelve to one. For an Israeli that makes it about even," he says.

The Delta Force (1986), writes a *Variety* critic, "is purest fantasy pitting the noble Yankees against the dirty, low-down Palestinians." Featured as a "network premier movie" on NBC (November 1988), *The Delta Force* focuses on an American commando unit that rescues hijacked plane passengers in the Middle East. "We have declared war against the U.S. and the Zionists," screams the Palestinian hijacker. He tells the hostages: "One day I will go there (to the White House). I will drive a truck and the truck—it will blow. Don't think we don't have friends in America."

The skyjackers, who appear as yesterday's Nazis, kill a navy diver.

Since 1980, Hollywood's image makers have demonized and delegitimized Palestinians in 10 major motion pictures.



After shouting "Allah be praised," one steals a cross from a nun and beats a priest. "They don't like Jews, Mama," says a girl. "No," says her mother, "they don't like Jews." Passengers with Jewish names are singled out for harassment and beatings.

The American-Israeli screen connection plays a vital role in *The Delta Force*. The U.S. commando leader, played by Lee Marvin, is told by his commanding officer: "Israel is America's best friend in the Middle East." Marvin concurs and tells the Israelis with whom he collaborates: "You guys have done it before. Now it's our turn." Marvin summarizes the film's intent: "Audiences love to see the bad guy get it. Well, go see *The Delta Force*. The bad guys get it. . . . We start blowing up everybody (in Beirut); that's good old American revenge."

In *Hostage*, members of a PLO splinter group in Africa hijack a planeload of passengers. Unless the Palestinians' demand for $25 million is met, the grandson of the American Pentagon chief will be their first victim. On the plane, the unshaven Palestinian fanatics scoff at Christians reciting the Lord's prayer, kill a nurse, and seduce a movie star. The film concludes with a group of Vietnam veterans staging a dramatic rescue and nullifying the Palestinians. "These gangsters piss on the American flag," says one American combatant.

Terror is exported to Los Angeles in *Wanted Dead or Alive*. The film opens with Malik, a generic terrorist posing as a rabbi. Malik's first feat is to slice the throat of a genuine rabbi. He dons a ***kaffiyeh***, and joins up with Arab-Americans who assist him in blowing up a movie theater. Amidst the rubble is a girl's tattered doll. In 36 hours, Malik and hordes of faceless Arab-Americans wearing red and white checkered ***kaffiyehs***, murder 173 Californians, including

a member of the CIA. The terrorists plan to destroy a chemical plant. The flames will poison residents, making "Bhopal, India look like a minor traffic accident," says Malik.

In *The Ambassador*, *The Little Drummer Girl*, and *Children of Rage*, brutality is directed against Israelis in Europe and Israel.

The Little Drummer Girl (1984) begins with a Palestinian setting off an explosive which kills an Israeli ambassador, his wife, and son. The remaining scenes are "about Arab terrorists and Israeli intelligence," noted critics Robert Ebert and Gene Siskel.

The setting for *The Ambassador* (1984) is Israel. Here, the American ambassador appears as an advocate for direct talks between Palestinians and Israelis. He arranges a meeting between peacemakers from both camps. But Palestinian extremists enter the frame, kill each other and scores of Israeli youths. No Israeli extremists are seen killing innocents, however. The screenwriter's message: It is useless for Israelis to meet with Palestinians. If peace is to be achieved, only the more reasonable Israelis are qualified to determine the outcome.

The opening scene in *Children of Rage* (1987) reveals Palestinian fighters blowing up an Israeli bus. The Israelis kill some of the fighters. A Palestinian youth, whose brother was one of the casualties, seeks vengeance. At a popular dance hall for Israeli young people, he sets off a bomb killing scores of innocents. In the hope of building Palestinian-Israeli friendships, an Israeli doctor volunteers to help the Palestinians improve their medical facilities. The doctor's father disapproves, saying his son is an idealist. Eventually, the doctor, and those Palestinians who befriend him, are murdered by "radical" Palestinians.

A similar theme appears in *Deadline* (1987). In Lebanon, Palestinians who seek to make peace with Israel are murdered by fellow Palestinians. For example, Yassim, a prominent Palestinian, tells an American journalist: "If I say to the world, I recognize the state of Israel, it would not change anything. I would die." Before the interview begins, two assassins enter and shoot Yassim. Portrayed as homogenized mass murderers, *Deadline*'s producers project a message that Palestinians murder each other as well as Lebanese—Israelis do not kill anyone.

Perhaps one reason why the Palestinian remains the filmmaker's favorite whipping boy is because 8 of the 10 movies discussed here were filmed in Israel. While both works are of value, if you must choose between the two, read Journalism under Occupation. *Not only does it examine in more detail the political and legal realities of the situation, but it covers events through the Uprising.*

In *Half-Moon Street* (1986), Palestinians resort to violence in order to prevent peace talks from occurring. The Palestinian villain feigns friendship with an American scholar so that he can assassinate the British peacemaker, Lord Samuel Bulbeck. The tired movie cliché, Palestinians-against-peace, is perpetuated.

Only one 1980s film humanizes the Palestinian—*Hanna K.* (1983). However, it was withdrawn from theatrical distribution by the studio only a few months following its 1983 release. Viewers in major cities such as Boston and Washington, D.C., were not able to see the film. "The failure to distribute the film was but another example of the difficulty Palestinians have asserting their existence as human beings with human problems," notes Professor Edward Said.

Costa Gravas, the film's director, said: "*Hanna K.* is about a human problem in Israel. . . . There are Palestinians living there under certain kinds of pressure. For years people didn't think about that problem." Adds Gravas, left unresolved, this problem "could lead to war."

The viewer's sympathies lie mostly with a displaced Palestinian family whose house is destroyed by Israeli soldiers and Salim, a

See ***MOVIES****, page 36*

The Exile And Martyrdom Of A Palestinian Poem

Wendy Masri

Archtype is an undergraduate magazine at New York University. The editors of *Archtype* asked me for a piece, an editorial, to be submitted about being a Palestinian student at NYU. This is not a popular position to proclaim within the delicate framework of graduate school politics, as you might imagine, but neither was it a source of great inspiration—rather on par with a "what I did last summer" essay. For me, being Palestinian had been uneventful when compared with the woes of being a graduate student.

I protested. Then I backed up prudently, and offered a poem instead. It seemed the most appropriate vehicle for my sentiments on the subject in light of the steamy debate conducted daily in the major media. No one would dare accuse me of being unfair, beg me to change my word choice, urge me to adopt an "objective" stance—no one expects these things of a poet. Let's face it, poems enjoy reckless lives as wild children riding the crest of the public's popular emotional life racing alongside those renegades racked up in supermarket checkouts.

I had felt the poem coming anyway, so at least it would not mean any literary effort needlessly spent. Poetry had achieved a unique prominence during my first year in graduate school, a status which I attributed to its unrivaled effectiveness in combating writer's block, and its gloriously anarchistic irreverence for the grammar and punctuation of the *AP Stylebook*.

Poetry often offered the only possible response when confronting massive frustration. I found myself constantly jammed between a reflex to respond to insult and a call for propriety and prudence. Around mid-semester, one of my fellow graduate students, an Israeli, suffered quite a shock as we chatted during our break one day. I was a Palestinian? Was I sure? In her unguarded response, she provided the quintessential material requisite for poetry: grief beyond anger, humiliation beyond frustration.

I considered the potential repercussions of publishing poetry, not journalism; of publishing in my name, not anonymously; of not surrendering fully to the requests of the editors. I had nightmares of my poem vengefully placed amidst pornographic personals, or standing stripped naked alongside a cleverly crafted piece of Israeli public relations. Finally, I submitted the poem with this explicit and demanding cover letter, much as one might pin a note to a child's jacket:

> I submit this poem to you with certain stipulations. But first, I wish to remind you that the poem derives from a request from you—not from a request from you—not from a query I submitted. The fact that it is a poem is something I have discussed at length with you and need not address in this letter. However, it is a *poem*. I set certain limitations on its use, namely: 1) it may not be edited by you or your staff in any way; 2) I reserve the right to edit or remove it from publication at any point prior to distribution; 3) I will

Wendy Masri is a Palestinian American and a freelance journalist living in New York City. She is currently studying for a Master's degree in Journalism at New York University.

be allowed to see the placement and juxtaposition of other pertinient articles; 4) my proper name shall not be used—instead it will be published under pseudonym "wen"; 5) if *Archtype*'s publishing of this poem interferes in any way with the possibility of its paid publication, *Archtype* will release it.

If you find these stipulations too demanding, you may return the poem to Professor Giarelli or myself with an explanation. Prompt response to this letter will be appreciated to allow me ample time for rewrite.

A few weeks later, I was surprised by the editors' acceptance of the poem . . . but couldn't I add a prologue about who I was, about what it means to be a Palestinian, you know, a little background? No.

The *Archtype* editors, according to Rasha Mansouri, one of the editors, wanted to run *their* version of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict via selected editorials from each side. They chose my poem to stand in for a real editorial, yet they had been unable—even at the point they had approached me for it—to find a worthy opponent to uphold the currently unpopular Israeli position. According to Mansouri, the proposals for Israeli-oriented pieces were "weak." When the poem arrived, it appeared there was some danger of it standing alone, say perhaps on its "literary merit."

It seemed that the poem had initially opened an opportunity to reflect the pathetic and pointless information debate raging in the public forum. But, as with all else in the current battle, there was no parity. The star boxers had their fists up, but weren't squaring off like opponents—they weren't even facing each other.

Well, could I perhaps write a biography or an introduction to the poem? By the second draft deadline, it appeared that the poem could not be printed in all its bold and brutal brilliance. It needed to be cushioned; softened, it needed an explanation. I tried to recall the format for poems printed in *The New Yorker*. Did they have introductions? Were they preceded by bios of the poet? I offered the editors this:

> I have been asked to "introduce" this poem. Poems, though, are rather like children: the formalities of introduction are cumbersome compared to your visceral reaction (you either get along or you don't); brazen spontaneity spills out over the feeble constraints of grammar and overalls; and they tell you how they feel.
>
> Poems, like children, sometimes claim a small history—like this one. Someone asked me a question. Appalled and insulted, I conceived this poem. After a short gestation, the poem spilled out onto paper and took its first breath on these pages:

ARE YOU SURE?

Are you sure you're Palestinian? she said
Are you sure?
Could I be mistaken about my blood
and my mother?
Or is it the place that's in question
and which is more important?

Are you sure you're Israeli? I said
Or are you Jewish or Zionist?
Could you be confused about your blood
or your mother?
Or is it the place that's in question?
the question of Palestine

It's just that everyone (like you,
she meant) is Jewish
Nice people with big eyes and noses
always are
Anyway, doesn't everyone take
Rosh Hashanah off and eat knish
and support their cousins
by paying taxes?

Well, if that's your question
that's easy, I'm Muslim
It's that place
the one my blood gushes from daily
poked with holes from your bullets
that's been so hard to name

I know it had a name
I found my father's passport
hidden in the kitchen drawer
The writing I couldn't understand
but now I know it said
Palestine

The atlases lost her name
until I found an old one
They switched the names
erasing the secret one
and writing in their own
thinking no one would notice

The Arabic dictionary conspired
it seemed (it has no p)
but the bible called us Philistines
They tried to fool me
by changing the F
in Filastin

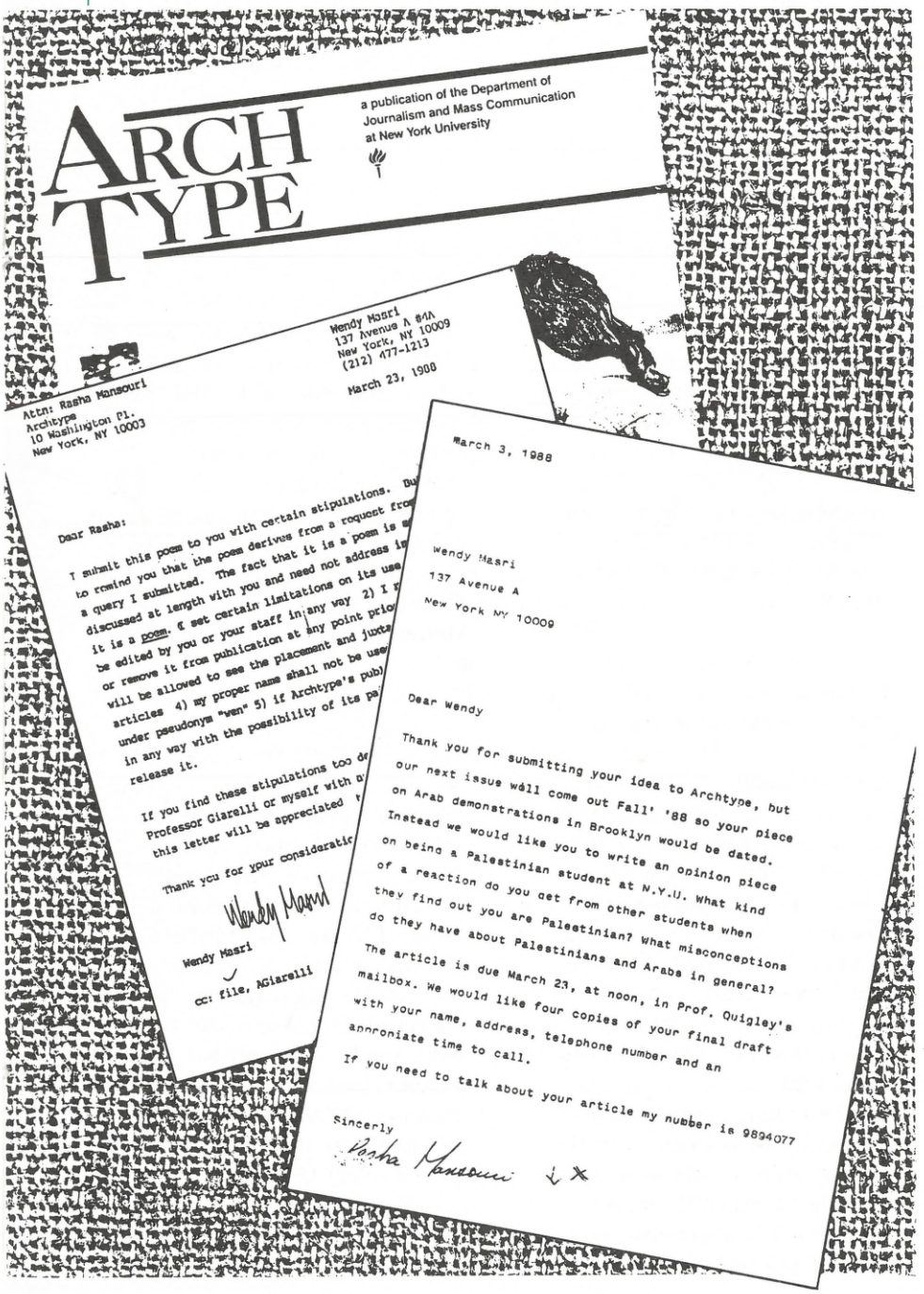
We ate rice-a-roni
my father laughed
and pigs-in-blankets
his morbid grin
Now Grandma's rice is Italian
and her cabbage wraps forbidden meat

No. Now I know
all these things have real names
Excavation has found the words
no amount of bulldozing can erase
the name tatooed on our hearts
Yes I'm sure, it's Palestine

As the deadline for production neared, the struggle for editorial "balance" dragged. Estelie Lander, an undergraduate in journalism, had submitted an interesting piece polling Israeli students' reactions to the current crisis. But the piece did not address the issues raised in the poem, its emotional pitch and tempo lagged. In an effort to make poem and piece "match," the first outline from my poem's second stanza, "Are you sure you're Israeli?

I said," was lifted and clumsily pasted as the headline on the Israeli piece. The Israeli piece would get the front page inside cover. The poem would get the back inside cover. Still, it wasn't working.

Our professor, Professor Quigley, put the issue to a class vote. Photocopies of the poem were passed around the room. The editors debated. At the end of the class, they agreed to print both piece and poem. But the poem would have one of the editors write a sort of disclaimer/introduction for it (since the poet had refused). This editor, according to Quigley, said he wasn't Israeli, but he seemed to have a lot of Israeli friends. The disclaimer read:



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Wendy Masri
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March 23, 1988

Attn: Rasha Mansouri
Archtype
10 Washington Pl.
New York, NY 10003

Dear Rasha:

I submit this poem to you with certain stipulations. Bu
to remind you that the poem derives from a request fro
a query I submitted. The fact that it is a poem is
discussed at length with you and need not address i
it is a poem. I set certain limitations on its use
be edited by you or your staff in any way 2) I
or remove it from publication at any point prio
will be allowed to see the placement and juxta
articles 4) my proper name shall not be use
under pseudonyms "even" 5) if Archtype's publ
in any way with the possibility of its pa
release it.

If you find these stipulations too d
Professor Giarelli or myself with
this letter will be appreciated

Thank you for your considerati

Wendy Masri

Wendy Masri

cc: file, AGiarelli

March 3, 1988

Wendy Masri
137 Avenue A
New York NY 10009

Dear Wendy

Thank you for submitting your idea to Archtype, but our next issue will come out Fall' '88 so your piece on Arab demonstrations in Brooklyn would be dated. Instead we would like you to write an opinion piece on being a Palestinian student at N.Y.U. What kind of a reaction do you get from other students when they find out you are Palestinian? What misconceptions do they have about Palestinians and Arabs in general?

The article is due March 23, at noon, in Prof. Quigley's mailbox. We would like four copies of your final draft with your name, address, telephone number and an appropriate time to call.

If you need to talk about your article my number is 9894077

Sincerly

Rasha Mansouri

A few weeks before *Archtype* entered its final stages of production we received the following poem written by a graduate student. She is a Palestinian American. Along with her submission came a request for control over both the placement and layout of her poem. Furthermore, she also wanted our guarantee that the poem would be published as submitted and with no editing. Finally she asked that the poem appear alone and not against an article with an opposing stance. So, what's an editor to do?

We first encountered the dilemma of whether political articles had a place in *Archtype*, and we decided that the magazine indeed was intended to reflect views as well as ideas of NYU students. We next met up with the question of fairness. Already having accepted a non-partisan piece on Israeli students, we feared that students would draw a faulty connection between the piece and the poem. There is no connection. We are running this poem in recognition of its literary merit and the author's prolific position on the subject. WE ARE IN NO WAY ENDORSING HER STANCE.

—THE EDITORS

Do poems *usually* get edited? Do poems commonly face off with "political articles"? Did poetry have a place in *Archtype*? What, exactly, is a "prolific position"? Arguing that *Archtype* had exceeded its page limit, Quigley pulled both pieces.

Stillborn, this Palestinian poem took its last breath on the editors' operating table. And with its last gasp, it dragged the Israeli piece along with it. Parity in death. ■

Partners in Apartheid: Israel And South Africa

Robert B. Ashmore

Just as ancient Athens was a democracy, while a majority of its inhabitants were slaves, so Israel and South Africa extend equal rights to those whom they judge to be equal, namely Jews and whites.

Jews in Israel and abroad bristle at suggested parallels between Israel and South Africa—comparisons that have been voiced with increasing frequency during the Palestinian Uprising that began in December 1987. Yet, it is Jewish words themselves that often confirm the contradictions in Jewish self-image.

Rafael Eitan, former chief of staff of the Israel Defense Forces and now Knesset member says,

> I don't understand the comparison between us and South Africa. . . . The Blacks there want to overpower the White minority, just like the Arabs here want to overpower us. And we, just like the White South African minority, must act to make sure we are not overpowered. I went to see a diamond mine there and saw what superb conditions Black workers are enjoying. So what if there is a separate lift for Blacks and Whites? That's the way they want it.

In a private meeting with fellow Jewish leaders early in 1988, Henry Kissinger reflected the obvious parallels between South African and Israeli repression of "the natives." He advised, "The Insurrection must be quelled immediately, and the first step should be to throw out television, *a la* South Africa." His exhortation to crush the Palestinians "overwhelmingly, brutally and rapidly" was leaked to the press, provoking the complaint from Kissinger that "it's enough to drive a man to drink."

To their credit, a number of prominent Jewish writers face the reality squarely. Professor Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi recently wrote in *New Outlook*, "Palestinians are native aliens who become foreigners by the mere act of being born (exactly the position of official apartheid regarding non-white South Africans)." He cited the historian, J. L. Talmon, who identified the Israeli predicament as the predicament of "the last white settlers in Asia, after the European imperialists and colonizers had made their exit."

Meron Benvenisti, former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, states the case with equal candor.

> When the character of the Second Israeli Republic becomes clear to the objective observer, when the outside world manages to overcome its reticence about preaching morals to the Jews, and when feelings of shame overcome the defense mechanisms of a nation apart—which Jews have developed over two thousand years of dispersion—then our self-serving delusions will finally be shattered. But then it might be too late.

Many significant parallels can be drawn between Israel and South

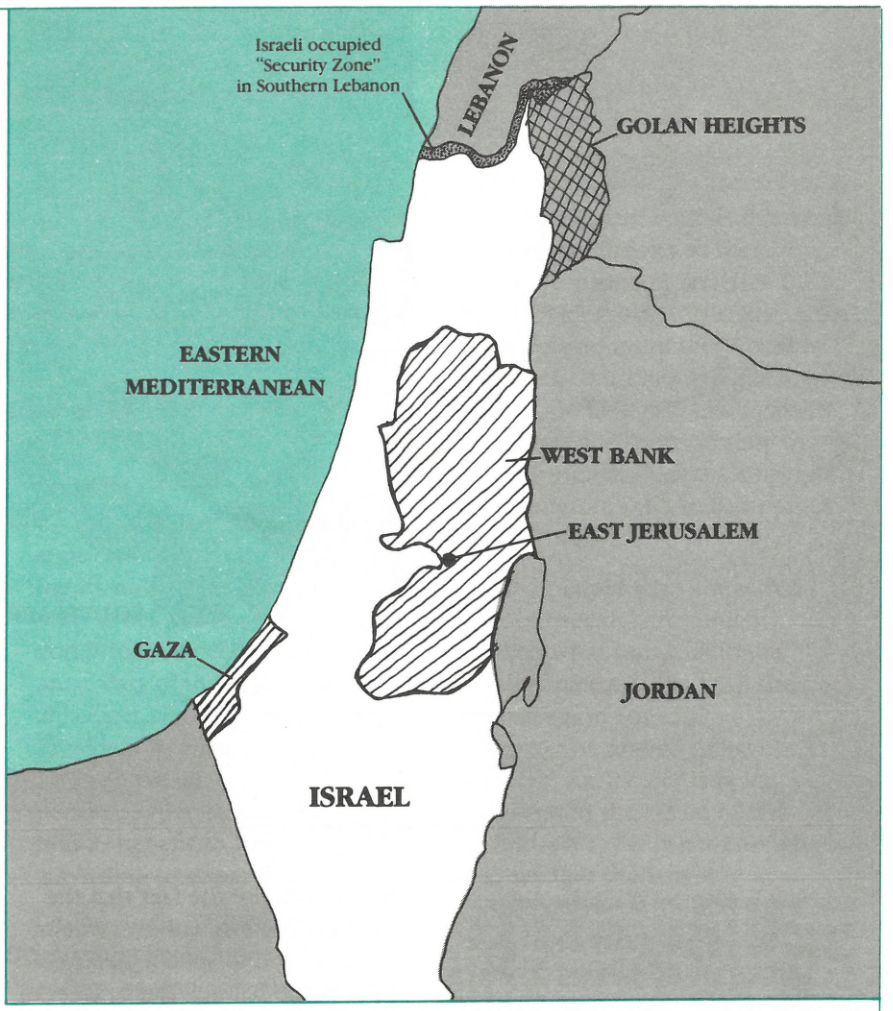
Dr. Robert B. Ashmore is professor of Philosophy at Marquette University, author of Building A Moral System, *and chairman of the Board of Directors of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign (PHRC).*

Africa. Both countries are perceived as products of Western imperialism, as reactionary forces in the Third World, and hence are international pariahs. In both countries, religion is invoked to justify status as divinely chosen people of God. Immigrants and their descendants monopolize most significant decision-making processes, despite the native peoples' inalienable right to decide what happens to them in, historically, their own land. Support of imperial powers was sought by both sets of colonizers, and today, they each reject *bona fide* secular democracy as equivalent to "destruction of the state."

Both South Africa and Israel use native populations as cheap, surplus labor forces, and they frustrate development of native sector industries and markets to maintain a dependent, captive consumer population. Censorship of the media is coupled with systematic human rights violations in both countries.

However, most Afrikaners and Israelis, preoccupied with past sufferings of their own people, display insensitivity to the suffering of others. Natan Sharansky, the freed Soviet dissident now living in Israel, has caused dismay among many former supporters by claiming, when asked about Israeli repression of Palestinians, that "it is not a human rights problem." Selective moral blindness on the part of Sharansky is shared by many American Jews who pressure the U.S. government in support of Soviet refuseniks, while refusing to acknowledge the human rights of Palestinian refuseniks to return to their homeland.

Black members of Congress met with Israel's Prime Minister Shamir in March 1988 and denounced the fact that "Israel has not joined the concerted international effort to impose sanctions against the apartheid system" of South Africa.



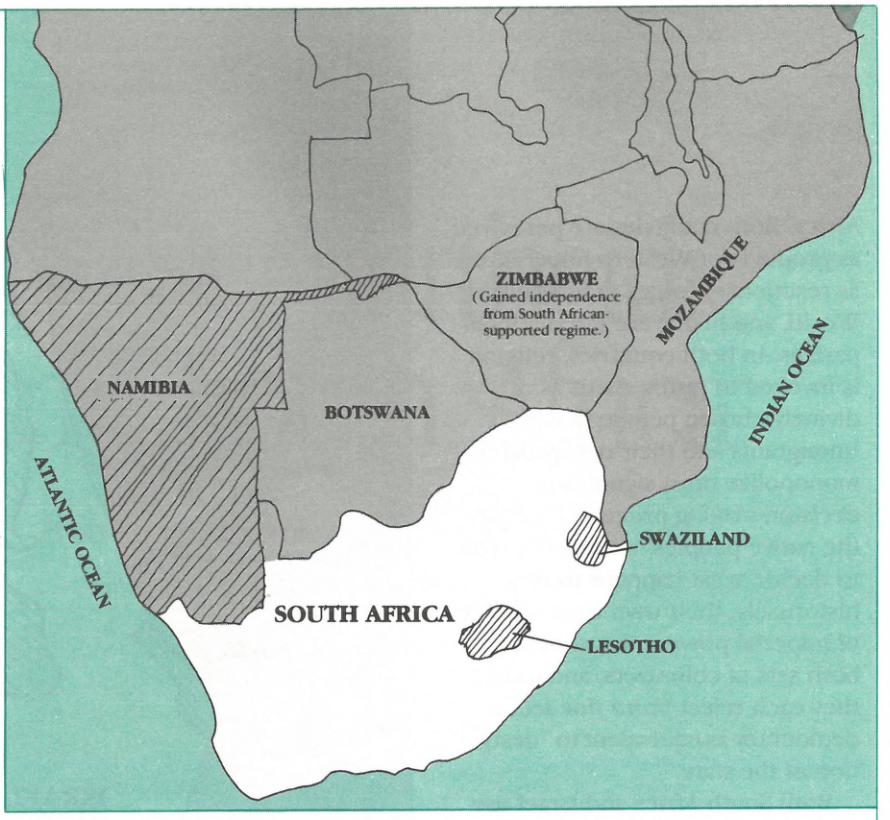
Israel.

And Nobel Laureate Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa has said to members of the American Jewish Congress, "We really cannot see how that could ever be consistent with who you are, your history, to have collaborated with a government whose policies are so reminiscent of Nazis."

More and more evidence is emerging today, however, to demonstrate that the history of Zionism made collaboration with racist and repressive regimes a quite natural phenomenon. Recent publications of Israeli writers such as Simcha Flapan, Tom Segev, and Benny Morris confirm earlier scholarship on discriminatory intentions of even the pioneers in the Zionist movement. It was Theodore Herzl who wrote in his diary that Palestine was "a plague-ridden, blighted corner of the Orient" to which Jews "as representatives of Western civilization would bring cleanliness, order, and the well-distilled customs of the Occident." And Chaim Weizman, to become Israel's first president, wrote to Britain's Arthur Balfour,

> The Arabs, who are superficially clever and quick witted, worship one thing, and one thing only—power and success. . . . [The Arab] screams as often as he can and blackmails as much as he can.

The exclusivity of Zionist plans was made clear even in public testimony of Israel's first prime minister. David Ben-Gurion testified before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine in 1947, "When we say a 'Jewish State' we mean Jewish country, Jewish soil, we mean Jewish labor, we mean Jewish economy, Jewish agriculture, Jewish industry, Jewish sea." Like South Africa, this project was



South Africa.

As the two countries become increasingly isolated from the rest of the world community because of their racist policies, South Africa and Israel can only naturally increase levels of cooperation that characterized the last 40 years of their military and economic relationship.

pursued despite the fact that the native population was overwhelmingly opposed to such a takeover.

When the Balfour Declaration of 1917 referred to "the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine," the reference was to Palestinian Arabs who constituted fully 92 percent of the population. Jews owned only 2 percent of the land. Even after 75 years of efforts, by 1947 Jews had acquired only 6.6 percent of the total land of Palestine. And, in 1948, on the eve of declaring themselves a "Jewish State in the land of Israel," the Arab population was 1.3 million of Palestine's total 1.9 million.

The exclusivist, racist mentality of Herzl, Weizman, and Ben-Gurion finds its parallel in early South African leaders. Jan Smuts, later to become prime minister, told a London audience in 1917 that South Africa's native population had to be kept "apart as much as possible in our institutions and in land ownership." His successor, J. B. M. Hertzog, told blacks, "It is not that we hate you, but if we give you the right to vote, within a short space of time the whole Parliament will be controlled by Natives." And Daniel Malan, the third of these South African prime ministers, declared,

> We hold this nationhood as our due, for it was given us by The Architect of the Universe. His aim was the formation of a new nation. The last hundred years have witnessed a miracle behind which must lie a divine plan. Afrikanerdom is not the work of men but the creation of God.

Over the years, Israel was able to accomplish Apartheid objectives of the most blatant sort by its land policy, just as the South African government policies had managed to seize for white purposes all but a fraction of the land.

In Israel "national patrimony" referred to the Jewish population only, development planning involved only Jews, and legal challenges to confiscations produced court decisions monotonously favorable to the state. Even were Palestinians to accept cash compensation for expropriated land, they were denied the ability to buy other land from the govern-

ment. Discrimination prevailed in the leasing of land: Palestinians were usually restricted to one-year leases while Jewish settlements routinely received 49-year leases. Moshe Dayan reminded fellow Israelis in 1969 that—

> Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You don't even know the names of these Arab villages, and I don't blame you, because these geography books no longer exist. Not only do the books not exist, the Arab villages are not there either. . . . There is not one single place built in this country that did not have a former Arab population.

Thus, in Israel today, as in George Orwell's *1984*, "the past is forbidden."

As the two countries become increasingly isolated from the rest of the world community because of their racist policies, South Africa and Israel can only naturally increase levels of cooperation that characterized the last 40 years of their military and economic relationship. For example, in late 1987 South Africa began hiring Israeli technicians who had worked on the Lavi aircraft. These Israeli engineers have now helped South Africa improve its own military airplane, the Cheetah. And, early in 1988, the Danish Seamen's Union disclosed that secret deliveries of weapons from Israel to South Africa were being made by ships staffed with its members.

The United States itself is today more isolated than ever because of its own uncritical support for Israel. United Nations votes of 130-2, 151-2, and 154-2 have coupled Israel and the United States against the entire world community on the issues of Israeli brutality during the *Intifadah* and denial of a visa to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Even when the United States goes through the motions of criticizing Israeli excesses, it quickly moves behind the scene to bolster its support for the Jewish state. As David Shipler reported in *The New York Times* in December 1987,

> At the same time the United States has been pressing Israel on the violence, the Administration has been strengthening its military relationship with Israel and improving the conditions of certain assistance. Part of the Congressional budget resolution signed by President Reagan this week, for example, is a debt-relief provision that means a $2 billion benefit to Israel, according to experts.

On December 7, 1988 the State Department announced that President Reagan gave the green light for resumption of U.S. delivery of cluster bombs to Israel. These are the same bombs that Israel dropped on civilian populations in Lebanon during the 1982 invasion thus violating U.S. export laws. Little wonder, then, that the United States now finds itself virtually as isolated as is South Africa in the judgment of member nations in the United Nations. The blacks of South Africa are themselves, of course, the most impressive witnesses to the deplorable reality of Israeli-South African comparisons. The Rev. Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Churches and a leader of the struggle in South Africa, spoke at a conference sponsored by the Palestine Human Rights Campaign in Washington, D.C., in September 1987. He said,

> Many people who knew that I would speak here tonight asked what the situation in Palestine has to do with the situation in Soweto, Capetown, and all those places where our history is being written in the blood of our children. . . . Is it not enough to say that the Israeli government at this moment has made the South African government its partner, that they have the same kind of policy, that the apartheid in Palestine today is so very much like the apartheid in my own homeland?

Ironically, then, it is children of the Holocaust who have themselves forgotten the moral message of the Holocaust—that no people anywhere may be deprived of their basic human rights. ■

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Diamonds: Key To Israel's Economy

Jane Hunter

Diamonds are the ultimate luxury item. And, as they have absolutely no strategic value, it would seem that diamonds are the obvious South African product to target for sanctions. However, as 23 members of Congress discovered when they drafted a bill last year to ban the import of South African diamonds, it is not that simple.

The U.S. public has repeatedly shown itself willing to be inconvenienced for the sake of ending apartheid. The problem is not, as Donald Regan, President Reagan's former chief of staff once put it, that "women" are not willing to give up their diamonds. It is, as the sponsors of a bill to outlaw the sales of South African diamonds soon discovered, that such a ban cannot be imposed without seriously harming the Israeli diamond industry. Israel cuts or polishes about half of the diamonds mined in the world.

The gems are not only a linchpin of the South African economy, they are a key source of foreign exchange for Israel—its third most profitable export after electronics and "metal goods," a euphemism for weapons. Israeli diamond manufacturers buy rough diamonds from the Central Selling Organization (CSO) in London, which markets at least 80 percent of the world's diamonds. Then, the CSO mixes the production of 20 countries, so, Israel's defenders claim, it is impossible to tell which stones are South African. And, they claim, only a tiny percentage of the stones sold in London are South African anyway.

The CSO is the marketing arm of De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd., South Africa's largest corporation. De Beers is known as the world's only successful cartel. With the help of its worldwide intelligence system, it regulates not only the quantity of rough diamonds that come on the market, but who will buy them at the "sights" it holds in London every six weeks or so.

In 1986, South Africa's trade and industry ministry claimed that only 9 to 10 percent of the diamonds sold by CSO came from South Africa. But CSO sources put the figure closer to 16 to 19 percent—and neither the white South African regime nor the CSO sources specify whether their figures included diamonds from the rich mines of Namibia or Bophuthatswana. Namibia is the former colony of South West Africa to which South Africa has only recently agreed to grant independence, and Bophuthatswana, is a so-called independent tribal homeland. These three sources combined—South Africa, Namibia, and Bophuthatswana—account for 35 percent of the diamonds that move through CSO.

According to these calculations, the proportion of South African diamonds that Israel cuts would be only about 8 percent, as Israel is only able to obtain half the diamonds it needs from the CSO. What the members of Congress sponsoring the bill to ban the import of South African diamonds were not told was that much of what Israel does not buy from the CSO comes from South Africa.

To the utmost relief of 2,000 Israeli diamond dealers and polishers, their approximately 10,000 employees, and the government of Israel, which

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Jane Hunter is editor of the monthly publication, Israeli Foreign Affairs.

Sabi Atteyih

supports the industry with a subsidy ($9.5 million in 1988) called a "foreign exchange insurance program," the bill in the U.S. Congress to outlaw sales of South African diamonds died a quiet death.

Unlike Israel's arms industry, with customers and statistics often too embarrassing to publicize, Israel's diamond industry has an image as sunny and wholesome as the Jaffa oranges which were once the symbol of the country's economy. And its trade statistics are published every month.

Yet beneath Israel's healthy $2 billion diamond sales total for 1987, there is the same cloud of secrecy which Israel uses to hide evidence of its weapons sales, its sales to South Africa, its nuclear weapons technology and electronics know-how, and the minerals purchases—uranium, as well as diamonds—from South Africa.

Some South African diamonds are bought outright by Israeli diamond merchants, who reportedly hold a "special license" to purchase them. The quantity of such purchases was recorded in Israel's official 1985 trade statistics as $10.8 million, but

Israel's Diamond Exports

(in billions of dollars, rounded to nearest tenth, *not* adjusted for inflation)

Year	Total Sales
1980	1.4
1981	1.1
1982	0.9
1983	1.0
1984	1.0
1985	1.2
1986	1.6
1987	2.0
1988*	2.2

*first 10 months

SOURCES: *Jerusalem Post*, *Financial Times* (United Kingdom), *Financial Mail* (South Africa).

some sources close to the Israeli diamond industry say that the total is far greater than that. They claim that one way or another, most of the rough stones polished in Israel come from South Africa. In the early 1980s, when the diamond industry was in the doldrums, South African trade representative Joseph Goldfinger was reportedly selling over $100 million worth of rough stones to Israel annually. Israeli diamond manufacturers say they make up the difference between what they get from CSO and what they need with purchases from traders in Belgium.

Also, as part of its record-breaking 1987 earnings, the Israeli diamond industry counted $250 million worth of "pre-polished" stones that were imported and simply resold abroad. There was no discussion of this quarter-billion-dollar business, which is very unusual in a country which celebrates industries turning over a tiny fraction of that amount. It seems quite clear that these diamonds were cut in South Africa and sent to Israel so they could be sold in North American and

European markets. In both these markets, Israel has favorable tariff rates and it does not carry the stigma of South Africa.

Indeed, in 1985, in its role as South Africa's diamond producer, De Beers began preparing for the sanctions it expected to be instituted against South Africa by Western governments. From 1983 to 1985, South Africa exported an average of 5.6 million carats of industrial diamonds to the United States. In 1987, it exported only 139,000. According to *The New York Times*, South Africa channeled the bulk of its diamonds to the United States through Israel, Britain, and Ireland. Israel has habitually acted as a sanctions-busting "springboard" for a range of South African goods. It was 1983 when Israel began allowing the import of polished diamonds.

Could it be that De Beers has kept Israeli diamond manufacturers on a short leash, selling them only half the rough stones they need through the CSO, in order to keep them hungry for the diamonds it mines and eager to earn a commission reexporting diamonds polished in South Africa? The possibility must not be dismissed.

Ten years ago, at a time when diamond prices were skyrocketing, Israeli diamond exporters, backed by Israeli banks, challenged De Beers, hoarding billions of dollars worth of diamonds. The cartel responded to this implicit threat of flooding the market by imposing a 40 percent surcharge on diamond sales worldwide and cutting CSO sales to Israel and the merchants supplying it. By 1981, the bubble had burst and Israeli banks called in $1.5 billion worth of loans. Many Israeli diamond establishments went under, and many of their diamond cutters resettled in South Africa.

Now fully recovered from that

One-third of the polished diamonds that entered the United States in 1987 came from Israel. That was $960 million worth, almost half of Israel's total exports.

experience, the Israeli diamond industry is in a phase of close cooperation with De Beers. The South African giant has biannual talks with the Association of Diamond Manufacturers, Israel's major trade group. De Beers influences the Israeli diamond industry through Israel's Union Bank, which holds more than half of Israel's diamond industry's outstanding debt. De Beers owns enough shares in Bank Leumi, London—Union Bank's parent company—to give it a seat on Union's board of directors.

Israel also relies on De Beers' massive advertising campaign—$120 million in 1988, and an estimated half billion dollars over the last 20 years—to sustain Japan's current voracity for diamonds. Beginning in 1987, that campaign (and a strengthening yen) resulted in a 49 percent increase in Israeli diamond sales to Japan, a market Israel shares with India.

Because of their use of low-cost labor, the new diamond industries of India, and, to a lesser extent, Malaysia and Sri Lanka, are sources of increasing concern to Israeli diamond polishers. India has grabbed a big piece of the business Israelis once did in small stones, those of a tenth of a carat or less, and is now the dominant producer in that category. Israel will appreciate De Beers' strong arm should Australia begin directly supplying India with rough diamonds from its extensive mines—or if Australia sets up its own polishing industry, as it is reportedly planning to do.

To stave off the newcomers, Israeli government and industry officials have called on their Belgian counterparts to overcome their traditional rivalry and work together to develop computer-guided cutting machines.

Just as Israeli diamond

Chanting South African miners at the Anglo American Corporation's Ergo Mine on the East Rand. The miners staged a sit in after voting the previous day to join the National Union of Mineworkers strike. AP/World Wide Photos

manufacturing is firmly tied to South Africa, the U.S. diamond market is inextricably connected to Israel. U.S. cash registers ring up 40 percent of the world's diamond sales. One-third of the polished diamonds that entered the United States in 1987 came from Israel. That was $960 million worth, almost half of Israel's total exports.

As a cartel, De Beers is barred from doing business in the United States, but that has not stopped its yuppie-targeted advertisements from saturating the U.S. media. By the end of 1986, 75 percent of the women in the United States owned a diamond.

Not long ago, diamonds were touted along with gold as inflation hedges. Now, those in the industry admit that it is much more difficult to convert diamonds into cash than it is to convert gold. According to the current conventional wisdom, diamonds are only a good investment for tax evaders, outlaws, and refugees.

As they are increasingly promoted as vanity items, rather than good investments, diamonds are making ever greater sense as a target for new sanctions legislation. At present, Israel's juggernaut of a congressional lobby might succeed in heading off such legislation. But for several years, Israeli dealers have expressed fears that diamonds could become the subject of an anti-apartheid consumer boycott, similar to the way products of Shell Oil are boycotted.

The current campaign against fur coats suggests that buyers of luxury items can be enlisted in a humanitarian campaign—and that surely the appalling working conditions of South African miners and the suffering of the black majority under apartheid will be as evocative as the plight of minks. A senior De Beers official recently confided to the *Los Angeles Times*: "At 3:00 am I get a nightmare. In the nightmare, women have decided that diamonds aren't beautiful anymore." ■

BOOK REVIEW

ONE WOMAN'S ANSAR STORY

BY GHADA TALHAMI

Dina Abdel Hamid, *Duet for Freedom*, foreword by John Le Carré. London: Quartet Books, 1988. 268 pages, $14.95.

Every revolution or social movement needs the personal documentation of eyewitness accounts and the subjective reports of its major players. The Palestinian revolution is no exception to this rule and must produce private testimonies specifically targeting a non-Arab readership.

Ethel Mannin's *The Road to Beersheba*, chronicling the 1948 forced march of the Arab population of Ramleh, and Father Elias Chacour's *Blood Brothers*, describing the destruction of the two Galilee villages of Iqrit and Bir'im, stand out as an exception to this general statement. Reverend Oudeh Rantisi's soon-to-be-completed memoir of the same Ramleh march will in time supplement this meager collection. But the Palestinian story as a whole has yet to impinge on the collective consciousness of Western publics. This is certainly not the case with the Holocaust and the founding of Israel which, together, have left an indelible mark on Western memories.

Thus, while the history of Palestine and its dismembered Arab population is replete with episodes of utter human deprivation, its English-language literature remains overwhelmingly didactic and impersonal. This trend may have reversed itself with the appearance of Dina Abdel Hamid's *Duet for Freedom*, which is as intensely personal as it is universalist in nature.

Dina Abdel Hamid, who needs no introduction to Arab readers, represents an exceptional and unique witness to the Palestinian drama of Ansar. Born to a proud Sharifian family of Al-Hijaz, through marriage she became the Queen of Jordan, and, later on, the wife of a Palestinian field commander. Utilizing the universalist theme of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, the author also recounts the private agony of one of these prisoners: her husband, Salah Ta'amari.

A hero of the battle of Karameh and the highest Palestinian officer to fall into Israeli hands, Ta'amari was to suffer unspeakable punishment and human degradation at the hands of his Israeli captors. Abdel Hamid interweaves the universalist within the particularist, and the theme of the collective suffering of the Palestinian people is powerfully projected. Thus, we learn what it was like for one Palestinian captive. And at the same time we learn of the bitter fate of thousands of Palestinian prisoners.

Duet for Freedom details the horror of one of Israel's most ignominious prison experiments. In 1982, in the wake of Israel's invasion of Lebanon, a special prison was set up outside the village of Ansar, near the southern Lebanese hill town of Nabatiya, which at one time housed around 10,000 Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners. Among its inhabitants were groups comprised of several male generations of the same family. In nearby Nabatiya, a much smaller number of women were also held captive.

Ghada Talhami is assistant professor of politics at Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Illinois, specializing in the Middle East.

Hastily constructed as a temporary detention center on the theory that the detainees would soon become the responsibility of the Lebanese authorities, Ansar consisted of rows of tents, sentinel towers, gravel roads, and nothing else. Its makeshift facilities compounded the harshness of the terrain and the viciousness of its guards. Ansar quickly earned the reputation of another Auschwitz and was seen in this light by its incarcerated inmates.

Having witnessed the random and "accidental" murder of some of their comrades in arms, and having experienced the occasional extreme punishment of solitary confinement in the pit, the prisoners could not make the finer distinctions between the Nazi and Israeli Auschwitz. The prisoners recognized Ansar as a concentration camp and relayed this impression whenever they could to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the few foreign journalists who were able to visit the camp.

Despite flashes of humanity by the camp's Israeli doctor, and despite small victories achieved as a result of prisoner solidarity and organization, Ansar remained one of Israel's harshest detention centers.

Israel's persistent rejection of the prisoners' prisoner-of-war (POW) status gave prison authorities a free hand in running Ansar. Despite pressure by the International Commission of Jurists, which called specifically for the extension of POW status to the inmates of Ansar under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, the Israelis continued to treat all 10,000 prisoners as "terrorists." Even after reminding the Israelis that the PLO was not an illegal organization in Lebanon and that to treat it as such would entail extending Israeli law to a foreign country, the Israelis clung to their position.

Salah Ta'amari himself was a military commander of known and declared rank who would certainly qualify for POW status under the laws of any country. Moreover, thousands of Ansar's detainees were neither PLO members nor Palestinian by origin. The struggle to achieve a modicum of legal standing, therefore, was the hardest battle for Ansar's residents. It meant, in essence, that visits by ICRC members were not automatically granted, the prisoners' demands were routinely denied, and the fate of the inmates was utterly uncertain.

Eventually, the limited number of rights won came only as a result of group resistance by the detainees. And a great deal of credit must go to the prisoners' committee headed by Ta'amari, not because the Israelis relented and changed their legal position.

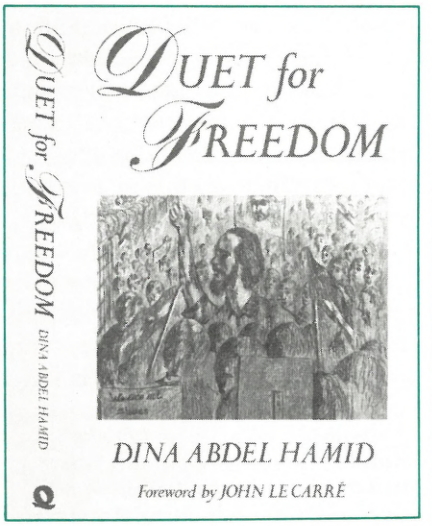
Yet, *Duet for Freedom* is not only the story of Ansar and its inmates, it is also the story of the campaign to gain the inmates' freedom. It is a story of Abdel Hamid's role as a negotiator, both with the Israelis and with various PLO groups holding Israeli prisoners of their own. Indeed, of the two themes of this book, the negotiations to free the detainees in exchange for six Israeli prisoners in PLO hands stand out as the more thrilling.

The negotiations and the author's role, first as a concerned wife seeking news of her missing husband and later as an official emissary of the PLO seeking the release of all of Ansar's inmates, are worthy of a Le Carré spy novel. One wonders if Le Carré's complimentary foreword was not actuated by this aspect of Abdel Hamid's endeavor rather than by his genuine sympathy for the Palestinian cause.

Nevertheless, Le Carré perceptibly sums up a significant

*See **ANSAR STORY**, page 36*

Having witnessed the random and "accidental" murder of some of their comrades in arms, and having experienced the occasional extreme punishment of solitary confinement in the pit, the prisoners could not make the finer distinctions between the Nazi and Israeli Auschwitz.



In His Speech To the United Nations

Arafat Launches Palestinian Peace Initiative*

Mr. President, Honorable Members: Fourteen years ago on 13 November 1974, I received a gracious invitation from you to expound the problem of our Palestinian people before this dignified Assembly. . . . Let it be known that I return to you with a stronger voice, a firmer determination and a greater confidence to reiterate my conviction that our struggle will bear fruit and that the State of Palestine, which we proclaimed at our Palestine National Council, will take its place amongst you to join (hands with) you in consolidating the Charter of this organization and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in putting an end to the tragedies afflicting humanity and in upholding the principles of right, justice, peace and freedom for all.

Fourteen years ago, when you told us in the General Assembly hall: "Yes to Palestine and the people of Palestine, yes to the Palestine Liberation Organization, yes to the inalienable national rights of the people of Palestine," a few imagined that your resolutions would carry little weight, failing to realize that these resolutions were among the springs that watered the olive branch I carried that day. Since then, we have watered it with blood, tears and sweat, and it has turned into a tree with roots entrenched in the ground, and a stem reaching for the sky promising to bear the fruits of victory over coercion, injustice and occupation. You gave us hope that freedom and justice would triumph and we gave you a generation of our people that has dedicated its life to the realization of that dream. It is the generation of the blessed *Intifada* which today is wielding the homeland's stones to defend the honor of this homeland and be worthy of belonging to a people thirsting for freedom and independence.

I said in concluding my address in our first encounter, that as chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and leader of the Palestine Revolution, I reaffirm that we do not wish to see a drop of Jewish or Arab blood shed, that we do not want the continuation of the fighting for one extra minute. I appealed to you then to spare us all these ordeals and sufferings and to speed up work on the foundations of a just peace based on securing the rights, hopes and aspirations of our people and the equal rights of all peoples.

I said that I was calling upon you to stand by the struggle of our people to exercise its right to self-determination and to enable our people to return from the exile into which it was driven at gunpoint. I solicited your help to end this injustice to which successive generations of our people have been subjected over several decades so that they can live free and sovereign on their soil and in their homeland, enjoying all their national and human rights. The last thing I said from this rostrum was that war breaks out from Palestine and that peace starts in Palestine.

The dream we entertained at the time was to establish a democratic state of Palestine in which Moslems, Christians and Jews would live with equal rights and obligations as one

**Excerpts from the official English translation of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's speech to the 43rd session of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in Geneva, December 13, 1988.*

unified community, like other peoples in this contemporary world.

We were shocked to hear Israeli officialdom interpret this Palestinian dream—inspired by the spiritual heritage which illuminated Palestine and the civilizational and humanitarian values calling for coexistence in a free democratic society—as a scheme to destroy and obliterate their entity.

Mr. President: We had to draw the necessary conclusion regarding the gap between this reality and the dream. We set out in the Palestine Liberation Organization to look for realistic and attainable formulas that would settle the issue on the basis of possible rather than absolute justice while securing the rights of our people to freedom, sovereignty and independence; ensuring for everyone peace, security and stability; and sparing Palestine and the Middle East wars and battles that have been going on for 40 years.

No one, Mr. President, would dispute the fact that the Palestine problem is the problem of our contemporary world. It is the oldest on your agenda. It is the most intricate and complex. Of the regional issues, it poses the most serious threat to international peace and security. Hence its priority among the issues which should command the attention of the two superpowers and all the countries of the world. Hence the need for an effort to outline a course for its equitable solution—a solution that would spread peace across the Middle East.

We in the Palestine Liberation Organization—as a leadership responsible for the people of Palestine and its destiny, loyal to the struggle of our people, venerating the sacrifices of our martyrs, eager to contribute to the prevailing climate of coexistence and detente, and consensus of the need to participate in the peaceful efforts to find a political settlement that would put an end to the tragedies of wars and fighting and would open the way for peaceful coexistence under international law—summoned our Palestine National Council to convene in an extraordinary session in Algiers last November 12-15, the purpose being to specify and clarify our position as a main party to the Arab-Israeli conflict, which cannot be settled without its participation and approval.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat addresses U.N. General Assembly in Geneva.

It pleases me to inform you, with great pride, that our Palestine National Council, through a totally free exercise of democracy, has again demonstrated its ability to shoulder its national responsibilities, endorsing serious constructive and responsible resolutions which pave the way for us to reinforce and highlight our desire and contribution to find a peaceful settlement that would secure the national and political rights of our people as well as peace and security for everyone else.

Mr. President: The first and **decisive** resolution of our Palestine National Council was the proclamation of the establishment of the State of Palestine, with the Holy City of Jerusalem (al-Quds ash-Shareef) as its capital.

To embody the aforementioned decision, our Palestine National Council adopted a series of resolutions. I am keen to spotlight the most salient of these, which underline our serious determination to pursue the path of an equitable peaceful settlement and to exert maximum effort to ensure its success.

Our PNC reaffirmed the necessity of convening an international conference on the issue of the Middle East and its core, the Palestinian issue, under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council and all parties to the conflict in the region, including, on an equal footing, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on the understanding that the international conference will be held on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the safeguarding of the legitimate national and political rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which is its right to self-determination.

Our PNC reasserted the need for Israel's withdrawal from all the

Palestinian and Arab territories it occupied in 1967, including Arab Jerusalem; the establishment of the Palestinian state; and the annulment of all expropriation and annexation measures and the dismantling of the settlements established by Israel in the Palestinian and Arab territories since 1967, as called for in the Arab summit resolutions of Fez and Algiers.

Our PNC also reaffirmed the necessity of seeking to place the occupied Palestinian territories, including Arab Jerusalem, under the supervision of the United Nations for a limited period, to protect our people, to create an atmosphere conducive to the success of the proceedings of the international conference toward the attainment of a comprehensive political settlement and the achievement of peace and security for all peoples and states in the Middle East, on the basis of mutual consent, and to enable the State of Palestine to exercise its effective authority in these territories, reaffirmed earlier by the resolutions of the Arab summits.

Our PNC called for the settlement of the issue of Palestinian refugees in accordance with the pertinent United Nations resolutions. It guaranteed the freedom of worship and the right to engage in religious rites for all faiths in the holy places in Palestine. And it reconfirmed that the relationship between the fraternal Jordanian and Palestinian peoples is a privileged one and that the future relationship between the State of Palestine and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan will be built on confederal foundations, on the basis of the two fraternal peoples' free and voluntary choice, in consolidation of the historic ties that bind them and the vital interests they hold in common. The PNC reaffirmed the need for the Security Council to draw up and guarantee arrangements for security and peace between all the states which are parties to the conflict in the region.

To the Israeli people in all their parties and forces, and especially to the advocates of democracy and peace among them. I say to them: Come, let us make peace. Cast away fear and intimidation.

These resolutions attest to the solemnity of the Palestinian people's position on the question of peace; that they are committed to peace and believe that it should be secured and guaranteed by the Security Council under the aegis of the United Nations. These resolutions constitute a firm, unambiguous response to all arguments, prejudices, stands and pretexts used by some nations to cast doubt on the position and policy of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

While we greatly appreciate the free American voices that have explained and supported our position and resolutions, we note that the U.S. administration remains uncommitted to even-handedness in its dealings with the parties to the conflict. It continues to demand from us alone the acceptance of positions which cannot be determined prior to negotiation and dialogue within the framework of the international conference.

I would point out here that the answer to the many questions being posed, regardless of their source, rests solely on the acceptance of the equality of the two parties to the conflict and on the recognition of their equal rights on a reciprocal basis. And if the policies applied on the ground are any reflection of the policy-makers intentions, it is the independence. It has also reaffirmed its rejection of terrorism in all its forms, including state terrorism, emphasizing its commitment to its past resolutions in this regard, and to the resolution of the Arab summit in Algiers in 1988, and to U.N. Resolutions 42/159 of 1987 and 61/40 of 1985, and to what was stated on this subject in the Cairo Declaration of 7 November 1985.

The position, Mr. President, is clear and free of all ambiguity. And yet, I, as chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, hereby once more declare that I condemn terrorism in all its forms, and at the same time salute those sitting before me in this hall who, in the days when they fought to free their countries from the yoke of colonialism, were accused of terrorism by their oppressors, and who today are the faithful leaders of their peoples, stalwart champions of justice and freedom. I also offer a reverent salute to the martyrs who have fallen at the hands of terrorism and terrorists, foremost among whom is my lifetime companion and deputy, the martyr-symbol Khalil al-Wazir, and the martyrs who fell in the massacres to which our people have been subjected in the various cities, villages and camps of the West Bank the Gaza Strip and South Lebanon.

Mr. President, Honorable Members: Our Palestinian homeland can bear no more waiting. Our Palestinian side that has more cause to worry and to demand reassurances about its fate and its future, facing as it does a state of Israel that is bristling with the latest of arms,

including nuclear weapons.

Mr. President: Our Palestine National Council has reaffirmed its commitment to the U.N. resolutions that uphold the right of peoples to resist foreign occupation, colonialism and racial discrimination, and their right to struggle for

people and our children, leading our march to liberty, holding aloft the torch of freedom, are being martyred daily for the sake of ending the occupation and laying the foundation of peace in their free, independent homeland and in the region as a whole.

For this reason, the Palestine National Council, taking into consideration the circumstances of the Palestinians and the Israelis and the need for a spirit of tolerance between them, built its resolutions on foundations of realism.

The United Nations bears a historic, extraordinary responsibility toward our people and their rights. More than 40 years ago, the United Nations, in its Resolution 181, decided on the establishment of two states in Palestine, one Palestinian Arab and the other Jewish. Despite the historic wrong that was done to our people, it is our view today that the said resolution continues to meet the requirements of international legitimacy which guarantee the Palestinian Arab people's right to sovereignty and national independence.

The acceleration of the peace process in the region requires special efforts on the part of the international community, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union, who bear a great responsibility toward the cause of peace in our region.

The United Nations, the permanent members of the Security Council and all international blocs and bodies have a vital role to play at this stage. In my capacity as

We set out in the Palestine Liberation Organization to look for realistic and attainable formulas that would settle the issue on the basis of possible rather than absolute justice.

chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, presently assuming the functions of the provisional government of the State of Palestine, I therefore present the following Palestinian peace initiative:

First: That a serious effort be made to convene, under the supervision of the Secretary General of the United Nations, the preparatory committee of the international conference for peace in the Middle East—in accordance with the initiative of President Gorbachev and President Mitterrand, which President Mitterrand presented to your Assembly toward the end of last September and which was supported by many states—to pave the way for the convening of the international conference, which commands universal support except from the government of Israel.

Second: In view of our belief in international legitimacy and the vital role of the United Nations, that actions be undertaken to place our occupied Palestinian land under temporary United Nations supervision, and that international forces be deployed there to protect our people and, at the same time, to supervise the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from our country.

Third: The PLO will seek a comprehensive settlement among the parties concerned in the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the State of Palestine, Israel and other neighbors, within the framework of the international conference for peace in the Middle East on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 and so as to guarantee equality and the balance of interests, especially our people's rights in freedom, national independence, and respect the right to exist in peace and security for all.

If these principles are endorsed at the international conference, we will have come a long way toward a just settlement, and this will enable us to reach agreement on all security and peace arrangements.

Mr. President: I hope it is clear to everyone that our Palestinian people, determined though they are to gain their legitimate national rights to self-determination, repatriation and the ending of the occupation of the Palestinian state's territory, are equally determined to strive for those goals by peaceful means within the framework of the international conference under the sponsorship of the United Nations and in accordance with its Charter and resolutions. I assure you that, like all other peoples on Earth, we are a people that yearns for peace—and perhaps with greater enthusiasm, considering our long years of suffering and the harsh conditions that plague us and our children, who are deprived of the normalcy of a life free of war, free of tragedy, free of the torment of exile, free of hopelessness and daily anguish.

So let the voices supporting the olive branch, peaceful coexistence and international entente be heard. Let all hands join in defense of a historic, possibly irreplaceable opportunity to put an end to a

tragedy that has lingered too long and cost thousands of lives and the destruction of hundreds of villages and cities. We reach for the olive branch because it sprouts in our hearts from the tree of the homeland, the tree of freedom.

Mr. President, Honorable Members: I come to you in the name of my people, offering my hands that we can make true peace, peace based on justice. I ask the leaders of Israel to come here, under the sponsorship of the United Nations, so that, together, we can forge that peace. I say to them, as I say to you, that our people, who want dignity, freedom and peace for themselves and security for their state, want the same things for all the states and parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. And here, I would address myself specifically to the Israeli people in all their parties and forces, and especially to the advocates of democracy and peace among them. I say to them: Come, let us make peace. Cast away fear and intimidation. Leave behind the specter of the wars that have raged continuously in the furnace of this conflict for the past 40 years. Set aside all threats of wars to come, whose fuel could only be the bodies of our children and yours. Come let us make peace. Let us make the peace of the bold, far from the arrogance of power and the weapons of destruction; far from occupation and oppression and humiliation and murder and torture. ■

MOVIES, from page 18

Palestinian who crosses the border into Israel to return to his native home where he lived as a boy. Noble, strong-willed and kind-hearted, Salim reacts to Israeli imprisonment by going on a hunger strike. His actions are similar to a proud black American fighting for his civil rights.

In summary, Palestinians do not speak for themselves in feature films: American and Israeli filmmakers speak for them. As Howard Rosenberg, Pulitzer prize-winning journalist with the *Los Angeles Times* said: "Hollywood is a stubborn child clutching a Linus blanket when it comes to relinquishing such ragged stereotypes as the Arab who is bloodthirsty." Perhaps one reason why the Palestinian remains the filmmaker's favorite whipping boy is because eight of the 10 movies discussed here were filmed in Israel. Yet, what if the same films had been produced in an Arab country and the producers opted to depict Palestinians as peacemakers and heroes, and Israelis as terrorists? These movies, if filmed and distributed at all, would certainly attract the concern of government leaders, motion picture critics and human rights activists. The scenarios would be cited as racist propaganda.

The absence of realistic Palestinian images continues to nurture suspicion and stereotype. Audiences never see Palestinians as ordinary people practicing law, playing soccer, driving taxis, singing lullabies, raising a family, or healing the sick.

There exists an induced silence concerning racist portrayals of Palestinians. Bias against the Palestinian people is so thoroughly ingrained, its practitioners do not seem to be aware of it.

Why have viewers, critics, and government officials failed to protest these dehumanizing portraits? What steps should be taken to correct the stereotype, to convince filmmakers to humanize Palestinians, to portray them as they portray other ethnic groups—no better, no worse? How much longer must Palestinians wait before they achieve the mainstream respectability that earns protection against prejudice and propaganda?

These are among the questions that need to be addressed before viewers can expect to see respectable and dignified Palestinians in the movies. Filmmakers should remember that when they denigrate one group, we all suffer. There is no place in a democratic society for appalling bigotry. ■

ANSAR STORY, from page 31

aspect of *Duet for Freedom*. He quickly captures the inherent contradiction between the author's persona and the difficult and public role thrust upon her. In a sentence worthy of C.G. Jung, Le Carré writes—

> And in Dina herself we see a woman of great reticence and style being dragged willy-nilly into the brawling-house of Middle Eastern politics.

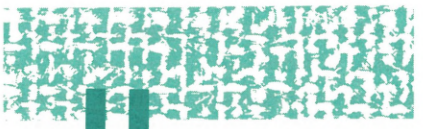
Abdel Hamid's reluctance to play this role and her sheer discomfort as a power-broker are evident throughout this book. For one thing, she makes it clear from the beginning that she is writing a love story—the story of Dina and Salah. Through detailed description of their idyllic life in Sidon on the eve of the storm, through recounting their moments of sheer joy and sharing, the author gives the clear impression that war and diplomacy were not her favorite subjects. Through vignettes of people who crossed her path during the tumultuous years following Israel's

thrust into Lebanon, she makes it clear that what she appreciates most in others is sensitivity and authenticity.

Yet, because of her love for one man, she came to defend and represent the entire population of Ansar. She also undertook extremely dangerous missions which took her, unaccompanied, on secret visits to Israel and to the Syrian headquarters of Ahmad Jibril at a time when relations between various PLO elements were extremely strained.

She, like other women, rode the emotional roller coaster of a prisoner's wife. Often, brief meetings with her husband under the watchful eye of his Israeli captors would end abruptly, and he would be taken forcibly back to his hellish Ansar.

Throughout her ordeal, however, she never shirked her responsibilities or the role thrust upon her. Instead, she quickly adjusted to her fate as the lifeline of 10,000 helpless human beings. A reluctant feminist at best, she never gloried in her new-found sense of power as a negotiator and the sustainer of all that mass of humanity at Ansar.



Her Ansar saga emerges as a tribute to all suffering Palestinian wives, mothers and daughters who are constantly forced by the harshness of their national struggle to renounce private lives for public roles.

One clearly senses the author's admiration for Um Jihad, whom she describes as a leader of women, just as her husband, Abu Jihad, was a leader of men. But she makes no such claims for herself. Her life remains to the end of this narrative a metaphor for the agonies and reluctant feminist identification of most Palestinian women. Her Ansar saga emerges as a tribute to all suffering Palestinian wives, mothers and daughters who are constantly forced by the harshness of their national struggle to renounce private lives for public roles. In the year of the *Intifadah*, *Duet for Freedom* should be read by everyone as a reminder of the limitless power of women thrust into precisely such public roles. ■

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censored. So editors save previously approved copy simply for the sake of filling out pages. These are but two examples of capriciousness of Israeli censorship. Many more appear in the book.

Having passed censorship, the newspaper must now be distributed. According to the book, this is a major problem for Palestinian newspapers, with major markets in the West Bank and Gaza, but not in East Jerusalem. Because Israel considers Jerusalem to be a part of Israel, a newspaper may find that its articles are approved for publication, but that it may not sell copies to its readers in the Occupied Territories. Suspensions of distribution permits have been frequent over the past year, forming an economic hardship for most publishers.

Added to these problems, Palestinian writers and editors are subject to the same litany of abuses as other Palestinians under occupation. They must endure official and settler harassment and violence, administrative detentions (imprisonment without charges or trial), town arrests, travel restrictions, and deportations. CPJ and Article 19 give detailed accounts of these practices, including the closure of the daily *Al-Mithaq* in 1986, the deportation of *Al-Sha'ab* editor Akram Haniyeh at the end of that year, the closure of the Palestine Press Service and *Al-Awdah* magazine this year, and the many measures taken against Palestinian newspapers and individual journalists before and during the Uprising.

Journalism under Occupation also includes a fine overview of the course of the occupation and the development of the Palestinian press, useful for anyone who wishes to understand what the Palestinian press is and the issues with which it deals. There is also a fascinating legal appendix concerning long-term military occupation. The thrust of this appendix is that while the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 *does* permit the occupier to censor publications, the extended nature of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza requires a new legal regime. The "military necessity" as envisaged by the Convention is largely irrelevant to conditions after two decades of hostilities have ended. *Journalism under Occupation* is clearly "must reading" for anyone who seeks an understanding of the dynamics of the Palestinian press. ■

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WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

Democracy Has No Boundaries

Raymonda Tawil

On January 20, George Bush will take the oath of the office to which he has been elected. Millions of people around the world will watch and hear as President-elect George Bush solemnly swears "to preserve, protect, and defend" the Constitution of the United States of America. We Palestinians will be watching.

Mr. Bush must be very proud to do so. The American people must also be proud to witness democracy in action—their own democracy, and their own constitution which protects them, protects their property, and guarantees their rights and freedom.

Meanwhile, we are denied our rights. We are denied democracy. We are denied protection for our very bodies, let alone protection for our property. We are denied our freedom. And we are outraged! While inalienable rights exist for the Americans in America, and they exist for other people in their own lands, they do not exist for Palestinians in Palestine.

The American spirit, American freedom, American ideals, the belief in liberty and democracy—these make it inevitable that despite the hostile track record of the U.S. government, the American people will eventually see that they have something in common with the people of Palestine. Both our peoples strive to be free.

As President-elect Bush prepares to take the reins of power, let us hope that he is able to empathize with the plight of the Palestinians. Let us hope that he will not be encumbered by the rigidities of past U.S. administrations and will be able to see that the values that *he* as a proud American holds so dearly are the same values that *we* as proud Palestinians are fighting for. Let us hope that under his administration, the United States recognizes the free and independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The United States is very powerful. It has the power to relieve the pain now. It has the power to accelerate the inevitable course of events in occupied Palestine. It has the power to stop the wars and end the bloodshed—now.

The Palestinian people are an optimistic people. We continue to dream—as America's founding fathers once did—of freedom. We dream of the day we will be able to sleep at night without fear that a foreign soldier will knock at the door to take someone away or blow up the house. We dream of building schools that never shut down. We dream of planting olive trees, grape vines, wheat, and so on without the fear that a curfew will keep us from harvesting them, or selling them, or consuming them. We dream of development that would create well-paying productive jobs and we dream of the security—both in economic and physical terms—so necessary for our children. We dream of democracy and pride in our own government, our own land, and our own Palestinian way of life.

Our yearning for democracy, dignity, and an independent Palestinian state is strong. But all we have is occupation. That is why we are angry. Nevertheless, our strength lies in the justness of our cause, in our determination to be free, and in our optimism. And that is why we will have our own independent state—sooner or later. ■

Raymonda Hawa Tawil is publisher of The Return. *She is currently residing in Jerusalem.*

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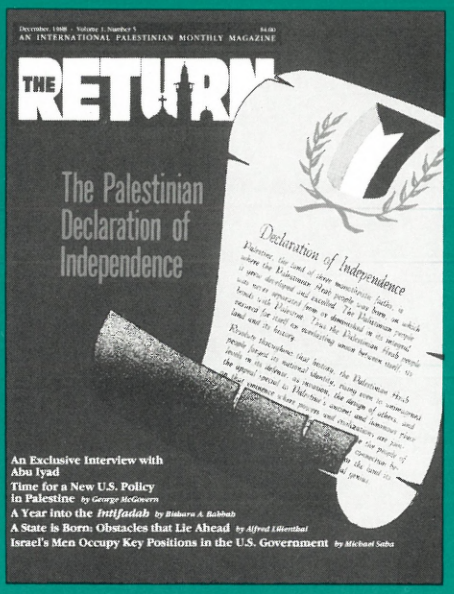
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